MILITARY
# Miniatures
IN REVIEW

Volume One, Number Two

First Quarter, 1994

# A Tale of Two Joes

## The DML & MB JSIIs compared

**Expanded New Product Section!**

## Hasegawa's Type 82 Kübelwagen
## The Fine Mold's Type 95 Ha-Go
## Italeri's All New Panther A

# Book Services Menu

*The following are served with a generous portion of quick service and a dash of limited availability. Order early to avoid disappointment. Reservations are strongly suggested, and are accepted by phone or fax. This will reserve your title(s) for 7 days. This is not a "stockless" system. We will special order titles if they are available to us. All orders are pre-paid and we can not yet accept credit cards. All books are soft cover unless noted otherwise. Bon Appetite!*

**Panzers at Samur, Number 1** (revised)
Slightly revised version of the original. A few more pictures of the King Tiger. Still the best reference around on the King Tiger. Also covers the Jagdtiger and the Lynx. Japanese and English text. 60 pages.
List $31.95; MMiR Subscriber Price: $25.50

**Panzers at Samur, Number 2**
More of the Samur vehicles. Excellent close-ups and drawings. Covers the Panther, Jagdpanther, Bergepanther and the Panzer Werfer. Also contains a brief study of Panzer crew uniforms. 60 pages. Japanese and English text.
List $25.95; MMiR Subscriber Price: $20.75

**Panzers at Samur, Number 3**
More and more of that good Samur stuff. This time covering the Hummel, Nashorn, Marder III, Wespe and Lorraine Schlepper. Excellent and rare photos. Japanese and English text. 60 pages.
List $28.95; MMiR Subscriber Price: $23.25

**Panzerfile 1993-94**
A very comprehensive compilation of all the German WWII 1/35th scale models available. Includes all the world's manufacturers. Encompasses plastics, resin, full kits, conversions, etched detail sets, tracks and just about anything else you can think of. Many color photos. A great "wish book" and a must for every German armor modeler. Japanese and English text. 60 pages.
List $39.95; MMiR Subscriber Price: $30.00

**Achtung Panzer No. 2, Panzer III**
The most in-depth look at the Panzer III that you're likely to find. Hundreds of line drawings of the smallest details on the tank. Photos too. All variants are covered, including command versions. Japanese and English text.
List $25.95; MMiR Subscriber Price: $20.75

**Achtung Panzer No. 3, Panzer IV**
This a re-release of Number 1 in the series, Panzer IV. This revision brings the title up to the standards of Number 2, with more drawings and a generous increase in photos. Square format like number 2. Japanese and English text.
List $36.95; MMiR Subscriber Price: $27.75

**Model Art, German Self Propelled Guns**
This special issue of the Japanese Magazine *Model Art* concerns the modeling of German SPGs. Hundreds of color photos and line drawings. Japanese text.
List $32.00; MMiR Subscriber Price: $25.75

**German Fighting Vehicles of WWII, Tank Magazine Special**
Hundreds of photos of all types of German WWII AFVs. Japanese text.
List $30.00; MMiR Subscriber Price: $25.00

**Sturm & Drang, Tank Magazine Specials**
Each volume pertains to a particular subject. They are literally crammed with photos of the various subjects. Some of the photos are quite rare and many are from private sources. All are Japanese text. All volumes priced separately.
List (each) $30.00; MMiR Subscriber Price: $24.00
**Volume 1, Tiger I**
**Volume 2, Sturmgeschutz**
**Volume 3, 250/251 Halftracks**
**Volume 4, Panzer IV**
**Volume 5, Panther**
**Volume 6, Panzerjäger - EXCELLENT!** MMiR Subscriber Price: $25.50

**Militaria Magazine Specials**
These French language books showcase various WWII battles. Although published in French, each volume contains many excellent photographs and full color illustrations. All volumes priced separately.
List (each) $17.95; MMiR Subscriber Price: $15.00

**No. 3, The Desert War-Tobrouk**
**No. 4, Breakthrough at Sedan** -Battle of France.
**No. 5, Operation Barbarossa**
**No. 6, Bir-Hakeim** -Desert War 1941-42.
**No. 7, Rhine & Danube**-The Free French battles for Germany
**No. 8, The Battle for Belgium, 1940**
**No. 9, The Battle for Moscow**
**No. 10, The Battle for the Reich**-Allied battles for Germany

**Militaria Magazine**
The ultimate reference for uniforms and equipment. Full color photographs of *every* piece of equipment and uniform item. All volumes priced separately. Double issues are in French. Single issues starting with number 1 are in English.
Double Issues: List (each) $15.95; MMiR Subscriber Price: $13.50
Single Issues: List (each) $5.95; MMiR Subscriber Price: $5.00
**Double Issues:**
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**No. 2, British Airborne in Normandy**
**No. 3, 12th SS HJ Division, Normandy**

**Single Issues (English)**
**No.1**; Seebees, German Peaked Caps, German Assault Packs of WWI, M$ Sherman, German Protection Police of WWII, and more.
**No. 2;** US Ary British made equipment, Mussolini's Black Brigade, British anti-gas equipment, German WWII ID disk, and more.

**The Spielberger German Armor & Military Vehicles Series**
This much hailed series is now becoming available in English.
All are hard cover with dust jacket.

**Volume 1, Panther** List $39.95; MMiR Subscriber Price: $33.00
**Volume 2, Sturmgeschutz** List $39.95; MMiR Subscriber Price: $33.00
**Volume 3, Panzer III** List $29.95; MMiR Subscriber Price: $23.00
**Volume 4, Panzer IV** List $29.95; MMiR Subscriber Price: $23.00

**T-72 Battlegroup**
This book covers the T-72 and its support vehicles; BRDM-2, BMP-2 and the ZSU-23M. A very thorough look at the T-72M1. All aspects of the vehicle illustrated. Black & white and color photos.
List $13.95; MMiR Subscriber Price: $5.00

**RZM Home Videos**
These video tapes are each compilations of German wartime propaganda newsreels. Each tape retains the authentic German narration. Many types of weapons and uniforms are shown. All the images are clear and low grain. A highly interesting and informative reference source. VHS format.

**Blitzkrieg! Germany conquers France, May-June 1940**
**Third Reich: 1944 "The Desperate Days"**
**Third Reich: 1945 "The Desperate Days"**

List $34.95; MMiR Subscriber Price: $29.75

**After The Battle Publications**
These magnificent publications have recently become available to us in extremely limited quantities. Each is without a doubt, the definitive work on the subject. Literally hundreds of photos in every volume, covering all aspects of the conflict described. If you need to know more about these title feel free to call and discuss them. Satisfaction guaranteed.
**RESERVATIONS ARE MANDATORY** on these titles due to their rarity and discount.
Large format (8 1/2 x 12), hardcover with dust jacket.

**Panzers In Normandy** List $48.00; MMiR Subscriber Price: $40.00
**Battle of the Bulge** List $95.00; MMiR Subscriber Price: $85.00
**Blitzkreig in the West** List $95.00; MMiR Subscriber Price: $85.00
**Berlin Then and Now** List $95.00; MMiR Subscriber Price: $85.00

***After The Battle Magazine*** The original "Then and Now" format. 53 pages. Current issue is number 82 on the battle for Iwo Jima.

List $5.75; MMiR Subscriber Price: $4.50

The following titles are now out of print: Tank Magazine Specials; *German Small Arms & Weapons*, all volumes; *T-80/72/64; T-54/T-55/T-62; Italian Campaign*; and Militaria Magazine Double Issue, *U.S. Airborne*. Also note that *Sturm & Drang #6* shows a price increase and the Tank Magazine Special on German AFVs has been revised.

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MILITARY™
# Miniatures
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ IN REVIEW ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## C O N T E N T S

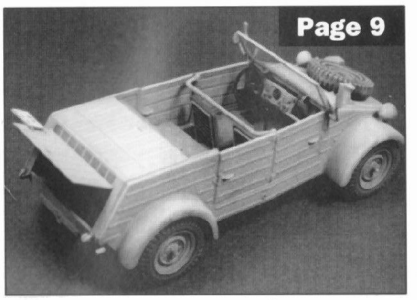
### In Review

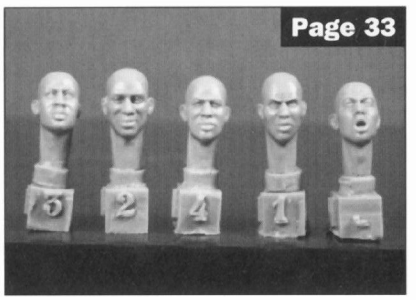
**Kubel-Mania** 9
*A look at the all new German Kübelwagen from Hasegawa, with reference photos.*

**Two Guys Names Joe** 14
*Reviewing and comparing the Dragon Model's and the MB Model's JSII.*

**Party With Your Panther** 23
*A close look at the all new Italeri Panther A.*

**A Type-95 That's Just Your Type** 28
*A close (maybe too close) look at the Fine Mold's Type 95, Japanese light tank.*






### Features

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*The readers speak.*

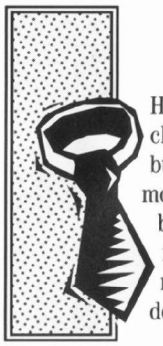
**Short Takes** 4
*A quick look at what's new on video, in print, in plastic, and general other stuff for the Military Minded.*

**Mini-Men** 33
*A peek at what's new on the figure front.*

**ON THE COVER:**

**Rather uniquely, both a resin manufacturer and a plastic one have released kits about the same time. Is plastic always better? Find out on page 14.**

# From Your Editor



Here's an idea for ya. Go out right now and form your own armor club. You heard me. Not too-too long ago, myself and all my armor buddies got together and decided we wanted to assemble once a month for the express purpose of completely geeking out on nothing but armor. Even we didn't think it would last. But as it happens that first meeting was almost four years ago. We haven't missed a meeting but once (I think), and even if the turnout was only half a dozen guys, we all had a blast.

Now, now, I'm not advocating jumping off of all your local IPMS chapters. Most guys in our armor-only club still go to their various local IPMS meetings on a regular basis, not to mention the IPMS regional and National meets.

Our club by the way, encompasses IPMS chapters from Jupiter (Florida, not the planet), to the Southern part of Miami—all told over 100 miles. IPMS lives on for most of us, but once a month we don't share any time with the fly-boys, the car-kooks or the ship-shemps. We just armor-out for a day. Oh, and get this: no minutes, no dues, no speeches. It's just basically one big bull session. We talk about everything, from history to hatches.

We made just one rule at the beginning though: NO snobby put-downs of another guy's model. If you have an honest criticism, state it and back it up—make it constructive, not destructive. This, I think, has made us all better builders. Sometimes you get too close to a project and can't see the forest for the trees. If your aim is competition, having an objective source say: "hey, I think you missed a glue stain" sure beats: "honorable mention." And if your aim is just to build for fun, finding out what else you can do to make your models look cool, is just tons *more* fun.

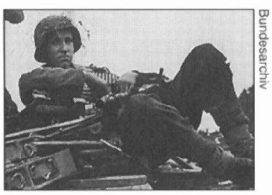
National Archives

The exchange of armor related information is pretty impressive as well. The combined libraries and mailing lists of a dozen hard-core armor builders never stops impressing me. Members who have not been in the hobby for long find this most helpful, as they get a chance to review expensive materials before laying out their hard-earned samolians.

We rotate each meeting between our three counties, with each guy getting a turn to host a meeting. Membership is small (about twelve, give or take), so the meetings are held at home, and the host offers his own brand of hospitality. Sooner or later, everybody hosts, so the cost is distributed pretty much equally.

So be fearless and give it a try, it just might work. We armor-types tend to herd, it's a proven fact. Please don't tell the fly-boys though, they might want to start an all-airplane club. Imagine that...

### Price Wars, Continued



Bundesarchiv

Do we really care about price? I know, I know, we all gripe and moan. But do most of us just finally cave-in and buy? I've done it more than I care to admit. Just where is the line drawn, exactly? I mean, specifically how much is too much? About the most expensive single purchase I've ever made was the Gunze Sangyo (surprise) H-35 Geschutzwagen (Gesundheit!), for about $185.00. I thought it was just about worth it given the huge sheet of brass, Model Kasten tracks, and a mammoth metal gun. I have probably spent about that much on certain projects when the cost of brass, kit, accessories, etc. were all added together.

Gunze Sangyo released a 1.5cm German howitzer kit last year for around $225.00. I believe that is the most expensive 1/35th scale kit so far. This year we have 1/16th scale tanks for around four hundred bucks. Is that too much? I'm just asking. There's talk around the industry of 1/35th scale railroad guns. Price: around four hundred-fifty dollars.

Drop us a note and let us know were you might draw the line. Let us know what you think is just too much to pay for a kit. No fibbing now, what's the most expensive thing in your closet?

### There's no place like MMiR

Yes, yes, we're late. Apologies to all. We hope to surprise everyone and be on time for number three. Well anywho... here's numero two for y'all. We have a few new-ish things herein. We compare a plastic kit with its resin counterpart. Is plastic always better? Read and find out.

The Real Thing feature is back in integrated form with bits about the review vehicles. Check out the interior shots of the JSII. You won't see that in no magazine with *airplanes* in it. Dig in and enjoy!

*Pat Stansell*
*Publisher*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# The Mail Sack

### Maus 'n Stuff

I enjoyed your recent article on the Maus. I have a theory on the color of the Maus you pictured. I believe that this vehicle is painted in dark red oxide primer. There are a few photos in the Schiffer book of the Maus being off-loaded from a train. In these pictures, the Maus' wheels are a lighter shade (maybe dark yellow) as are the fittings over the electric drive. The Germans often test drove the Tiger prototypes before painting them (see Tiger I by Culver & Fiest).

I also found two back issues of Tank Magazine (TM; 91:3 & 93:8) that show what appears to be a third finished Maus. The photos show a tank that has several bolts mounted into the front fenders. This vehicle also shows several shell hits around the front glacis. These details do not appear on the Kubinka vehicle, as far as I can tell. The vehicle pictured is parked along side a Tiger II in a vehicle dump. The TM articles also contrast two different types of turrets. I don't read Japanese, but it appears that there's even more to the Maus mystery that you thought!

*—Mike Kalbfleisch*

✉

### More Maus 'n Stuff

I have just read your second issue and find it improved over the Pilot Issue. Keep up the good work.

Two comments on number two. First, your avid reporter needs to remember the 2-1/2 ton reo-designed cargo truck series is the M35 not the M49. An M49 towing an M102 howitzer would be intriguing—as it is an aviation fuel tanker towing a airborne/airmobile howitzer.

Second, on the Maus controversy. The directors of the Kubinka armor museum, Colonel (Ret.) N. Bachurin, and Colonel (Ret.) S. Kuts, reported in an article written for the Russian language magazine *Tekhnika i Vooruzhenie* (Technology and Armaments) in November 1991, that the records of the Red Army reflected three Maus tanks were fielded at the end of the war. The Russians report that the Germans had cobbled the tanks together and sent them out to perform duty as fixed defensive positions. One was assigned to Wehrmacht headquarters at Zossen-Wunsdorf; one to the Reichchancellory in Berlin; and one to protect the experimental vehicle range at Kummersdorf. All of these areas are within 40 km of each other. The Russians state that their Maus, along with a number of interesting documents, was the one taken at Kummersdorf. There is no evidence in the west to support their claims, and in some cases the directors have been noted by western researchers like Mr. Zaloga, to have made elementary mistakes in vehicle identification. However, the Russians were the "winners" and many documents published by the Germans, including some recent ones, still refuse to believe that the forces that beat them were better that they were. The bottom line is that until some more tangible evidence is provided, the Russian statements are the most valid ones.

By the way, the Russians offered the Kubinka Maus back to the museum at Muensterlager—for $5,000,000 U.S. up front.

*—Stephen "Cookie" Sewell*

*Mmmmmm... verdy in-ter-es-ting. Thank you Mr. Sewell. This information certainly does lend itself to some tantalizing diorama ideas.*

*Five millions bucks? And we thought kit prices were high. Does anybody else out there have anything to add?*

*Oh, incidentally, our editor drives a M49 to work every day and one of our staffers just swears he was towing a M102 one day last week...*

✉

### Tiger Trouble

This letter is in response to the review on the Tamiya Henshel Tiger II in Vol. 1, No. 1. Ken Dugan writes that he left off the raised screen covers (parts D12 and D13) as they were only seen on the early Porsche Tigers. He further states that couldn't find any photos of Henschel Tigers with such covers. First of all, the photo that ran alongside the review shows "332" with those covers. Secondly, there is abundant reference showing the screens installed on Henschel Tigers. Most notably, the Schiffer Volumes I and II on the Tiger II.

To be fair, there are photos of both types without covers. Specifically, photos of every vehicle represented on the decal sheet can be found in these two books, and all four have these covers. While another reference may have just had pictures of early Porsche Tigers with these covers, such a blanket statement is just not accurate.

I don't mean to slam the reviewer, but my point is: A long time modeler has the references to check this out, but a newcomer may be led down the wrong path by a statement like this. This one point aside, I felt this was good review, as were the others. They were informative, fair and even-handed, without an ax to grind. The magazine's format is still good and carries on the promise of the initial magazine.

*—Paul Hanson*

*Mr. Dugan responds: "I, I, I, I was... I didn't... But... But I..." Such prose! Mr. Hanson's point is well taken, therefore Mr. Dugan has been lashed to a chair and forced to view Wehrmacht newsreels for 12 hours. He will also get no Polly-S for one week.*

✉

### Correction City

I recently received Volume 1, Number 1 of MMiR, and I especially enjoyed the preview of 1994 kits and accessories at the Chicago Model Hobby show.

One small criticism on the book reviews: you failed to mention that the *Leichte Jagdpanzer* book is in German. Readers could be mis-led by this review following that of the three English translations of Herr Spielberger's other armor books by Schiffer Publishing.

*—Stan Phillips*

*OOPS! Right you are Mr. Phillips. Leichte Jagdpanzer is indeed written in German. Ditto on this month's Schwere Jagdpanzer.*

✉

### We Want Them All Now Too

I had to write this note if for no other reason than to thank you for an enjoyable magazine. At this time, the only complaint I have is that there's not enough of your publication. I didn't read it so much as I inhaled it.

I hope you can expand the New Products Section. I love hearing about what's new and what's going to come out. Any chance for some interviews with people in the business? Maybe some of the designers, or one-man businesses, or master-kit builders; how they got where they are and what they do.

I believe this is an exciting time in armor and figure modeling. There's so many great kits coming out; I want them all—NOW!

*—Paul J. White*

*Check out this month's expanded New Products Section. As to the interviews Mr. White mentioned, stay tuned...*

✉

### Got a problem with any of this?

Well write to us, dammit! Send those comments to: *Mail Sack, Military Miniatures in Review, 21045 Commercial Trail, Boca Raton, Florida 33486-1006.*

## NOTICE BOARD

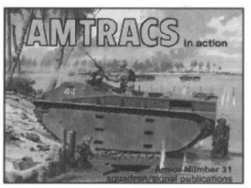
Don't forget, if you overpaid on your initial subscription ($25.50), you have a standing credit of $1.10.

Also: if we don't have it already, please forward your Zip + 4 code. This helps MMiR reach you faster!

Hey, does anybody know whatever happened to Hal Sanford?

# Book Reviews

**AMTRACS in action**
*by Jim Mesko*
*Squadron Signal Publications*
*Illustrated by Don Greer, Tom Tullis and Joe Sewell*
*Soft cover, B&W and color, 52 pages.*

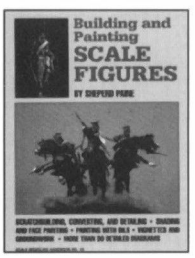



ARMOR IN ACTION Number 31 covers the development and production of the WWII amphibious fighting vehicle. Mr. Mesko traces the development of the LVT from its origins as a swamp rescue vehicle in Florida, to its final uses in Korea.

All of the variants are covered; LVT-1 through the LVT (A)-5, using photos, plans and full color illustrations. All of the photos are clear and crisp. We were impressed by the fact that most of the photos are large enough to make out many of the smaller details of the vehicles. There are also close-up views of turrets as well as interior shots. These types of things are what makes these books so useful, and they were often absent in previous Squadron books.

Recommended. Now if only someone would release a decent model of an LVT...

**Building and Painting Scale Figures**
*By Shepard Paine*
*Kalmbach Publishing*
*Soft cover, B&W and color,*
*112 pages, indexed.*




IT HAS BEEN A WHILE SINCE Mr. Paine has had A title from Kalmbach, or anyone for that matter. His books on armor, dioramas and photographing models were staples in modeling libraries throughout the eighties. Some of the techniques were beginning to show their age in those older titles, as new products and materials have been developed in the recent boom years.

Mr. Paine brings us up to date in a big way with this new effort. This book is crammed with information about all aspects of figure painting and modeling.

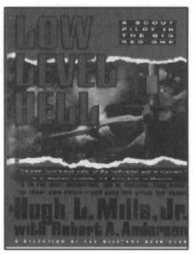
The coverage is very thorough, and as in his earlier books, the work of many different individuals is used to illustrate the various descriptions. The book nearly ends up being a "who's-who" of the figure world, with magnificent photos of the talents of Bill Horan, Phillip Stearns, Mike Good, Mike McCowen, Jim Holt, and of course Mr. Paine himself.

The amount of information in this small book is staggering. We were very pleased to see complete explanations of all of the current techniques, including those regarding the use of A/B and Duro putties. Even Old Dogs will learn a few tricks from these pages.

We've heard a rumor that Mr. Paine is reworking his older How to Build Dioramas book, and that would make an excellent companion volume.

Look for this book at your local hobby shop first. If you can not find it locally, Kalmbach does have a mail order division for the sale of all of its titles; Greenberg Books. They take phone orders 24 hours a day, *and* they have an eight hundred number: 800-533-6644. Customer service inquires can be directed to 800-446-5489.

**Low Level Hell**
*A Scout Pilot in The Big Red One*
*by Hugh L. Mills, Jr.*
*with Robert A. Anderson*
*Dell Publishing*
*Paperback, 370 pages,*
*32 B&W photos, glossary.*




FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE intrigued with the possibility of modeling any of the new 1/35th helicopters; have we got the book for you!

*Low Level Hell* is authored by Hugh Mills, who's OH-6 Loach is the subject of the DML kit. We can't recall when there has been a correlation like this between a published book and a model. Heck, even Michael Wittman never had his own Tiger kit!

The book deals specifically with Mr. Mills' first tour in Vietnam between 1969 and 1970, as a platoon leader in the Darkhorse company of the 1st Infantry Division. He recounts his days as a scout pilot with amazing clarity. His recall is quite complete and his descriptions of ground-to-air engagements are riveting.

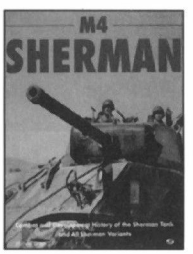
This is not a comic book however, this is a complete story of real war. Mr. Mills' account is a very honest one, with no detail, however graphic, left out. One gets the sense of the true cost involved in the exploits of these brave young pilots.

If you model to learn a little more about history, we can't think of a better way to learn about this period. By the kit and read the book! This book isn't just for rotor heads either. It's an excellent read for anyone interested in military subjects. Mr. Mills descriptions encompass the whole spectrum of airborne infantry combat in Vietnam. We'd also recommend this to younger guys who are looking for a way to learn more about the Vietnam era in general.

If we had one complaint to make, it would be that it's a little too short. Mr. Mills did three tours in Vietnam; two as a Darkhorse scout, and one as the other half of the Hunter-Killer team; a Cobra pilot. Perhaps there will be sequels. Regardless, this book gets a double "thumbs-up" from us.

*Low Level Hell* was originally offered in hard cover as a Military Book Club Selection. If you are a member, you may still be able to order it in that form (the photos are bigger). It is in general release as a paper back for about five bucks. If your local book store doesn't stock it, write to: Dell Readers Service, Box DR, 1540 Broadway, New York, NY 10036.

**M4 Sherman**
*Michael Green*
*Motor Books International, 1993*
*Soft cover, Color and B&W,*
*144 pages, indexed.*




BOOKS ON THE SHERMAN tank are in no short supply. Yet we have always wished for an inexpensive, general reference. The Hunnicutt volume was impressive in terms of size (and price). But, we apologize for the sacrilege, we never thought it was all that great. Just a little too esoteric and fragmented really to be used specifically as a modeling guide.

The new release from Motor Books fills this gap. Priced at $24.95, this book is a very good overall general reference. The text brushes across all the changes in the wartime (and postwar) life of the Sherman without getting boring. Also, the author has cleverly mixed wartime accounts of the Sherman in the text to illustrate the various

attributes and shortcomings of the tank.

The book is lavishly illustrated, with many wartime shots, as well as additional photos of contemporary restored vehicles. One of these vehicles is illustrated very comprehensively from the inside. All the crew positions are shown, along with many of the main interior mechanical components. That's almost worth the price right there.

We recommend this book to Sherman novices and aficionados alike.

Available at your local bookseller or write to: Motor Books International, P.O. Box 2, 729 Prospect Avenue, Osceola, WI 54020.

**Schwere Jagdpanzer**
*Entwicklung-Fertigung-Enstatz*
*by Walter J. Spielberger*
*Motorbach Verlag 1993*
*Hard cover, B&W with color illustrations, 200 pages.*

FOLLOWING THE EARLIER Leichte Jagdpanzer, this latest release from Dr. Spielberger covers the development of German Heavy Tank Destroyers of WWII. Published in German, this is probably Dr. Spielberger's most interesting effort yet.

The book covers the design and development of the Ferdinand/Elephant, the Jagdtiger and the Jagdpanther. As usual, there are some very interesting photos brought to light. You'll find rare interior shots of the Ferdinand and the Jagdtiger; a shot of a Jadgtiger sporting Elephant tracks around its Porsche suspension; and three of the most bizarre and unusual shots we have ever seen of German WWII armor.

The first is a series of shots showing two complete and apparently operational Tiger Ps. That's "P" for Porsche. Yes, these are the early prototypes that the Elephant was later based on. The vehicles appear to be Panzerbefehlswagens with extra radio sets, but still retaining full armament. Each vehicle is complete with crew, tools and markings. The markings are of the double zero type, indicating a headquarters company. The photos were taken on the Russian front in 1943. Each vehicle has the production Tiger turret, rather than the prototype version with the raised block on the roof.

The second oddball is what appears to be a Beobachtung Panther with a Panzer IV turret. Why waste a perfectly good Panther turret when it doesn't even mount a gun? There have been rumors about this vehicle, or a similar one being preserved at the Kubinka Army Museum in Moscow.

The third "believe it or not" is a turretless T-34 mounting a German-crewed quad flak vierling. There is no explanation of why this hybrid is included.

All and all not a title to be missed by German armor fans.

Check your local bookseller or contact: Articles of War, 8806 Bronx Ave., Skokie, IL 6007-1823.

## New Products

*Just when you thought it was safe to go back to the hobby shop... We thought we'd seen most of the year's releases in Chicago, but the manufacturers just keep piling up all the goodies. Here's what we know so far:*

### Dragon Models

Boys these guys just don't quit—a German E-100 Super Heavy Tank is on the way in March. This kit will share the same turret and weapons as the earlier Maus release. The rest of the vehicle is all new tooling. $45.00.

A JS-2m ChZk version is also due out in March. This is the later version of the Soviet WWII heavy tank and it differs with the JSII primarily around the front end of the hull, which is sharply angled. The gun mantlet and other small fittings also differ. $29.98.

We have just received DML's new SU-76m ($23.98) in our offices. A word of warning here; this is **NOT** the same level of quality that DML has worked so had to attain over the last 3 or 4 years. This kit was apparently designed by a Russian firm in cooperation with Dragon (next to the DML logo on the box top is the word: *Alan*), and the level of skill here does not yet approach that of DML's most recent releases. This is the first in a new series dubbed the "Imperial" line. A BA-20 armored car arrives in March, and may also be from *Alan* . The price on the BA-20 will be $21.98.

The Grille SPG has shifted from the Kirin line of products to DML's Imperial line. No explanation provided (like it matters), but the kit picked up a crew along the way, and this is now included in the retail price of $43.00.

DML's L70 Zwischenlosung has been officially announced for April release. This is the high hull version of the Jagdpanzer IV. Word has it that this kit will contain all new tooling for its hull and superstructure. Some re-tooling will also be evident on the road wheels and suspension arms. Look for a $29.98 retail.

On the figure front, DML continues blazing the trail, with several new injection molded sets in 1/35th scale.

A Soviet Motor Rifle Troops set is due out in March, and this set will undoubtedly compliment the JS series well. We haven't seen these as of yet, but we suspect that they will be sculpted as tank riders. This will make them very useful with all types of WWII Soviet armor. Look for a slight price increase with this set, up to $6.98.

Two types of special reaction teams will be featured in the LAPD SWAT Team set (for your Los Angeles street riot diorama) and the Hong Kong Flying Tigers Special Duty Unit. The latter representing the SWAT team of the Hong Kong Police. Both in 1/35th scale, and both at $6.50.

DML has also announced for February release a U.S. Helicopter Crew ($6.98). Depicting a crew from the Vietnam era, the set contains two pilot figures (probably the same nice ones contained in the OH-6) and two door gunners. The interesting thing about this set is that DML describes them as being produced especially for the OH-6 and *UH-1* gunships. UH-1? This kit has not yet been officially announced. The big version of the Huey will be a welcome addition on the 1/35th scene. Could Airborne Rifle Troops be far behind?

At the back end of the schedule is a U.S. Ranger set. This will depict a group of Rangers at the time of the D-Day landings. Undoubtedly inspired by the Pont du Hoc raid, these figures will feature late war uniforms and new weapons, like the BAR and a Thompson sub-machine gun. $6.98. April availability.

Continuing the Quarter Master series is a set of modern U.S. weapons. M72A3 rocket launcher, M2 machine gun and M16A2 are among just a few of the weapons represented. DML weapons have been superb from the very beginning, so these should be no exception. Available in April for $6.98.

### Italeri

There's lots of activity in the Italeri camp for this year. The following items were announced just at the end of '93. All release dates are approximate. A Soviet tank Crew ($5.75) and a BP Tank Trailer ($46.50) are scheduled for May release. The latter item is a bit of a mystery. It may be a misprint of one of their 1/24th scale truck kits. Or not. We'll see.

Reissues scheduled for June are: M32 ARV ($23.00); White Scout Car ($20.00); 3/4

ton Truck ($20.00); and the civilian model of the Opel Blitz in 1/24th scale ($42.50).

New releases for August are: M-113 A1 APC ($17.50); Panzerwerfer 42 ($17.50); M923 A1 "Big Foot" ($17.00); Soviet JSII ($23.00); SU-122 Howitzer ($14.00); and German Tank Accessories ($9.00).

Continuing the onslaught in December are: Jagdpanther ($23.00); Ferdinand - Tiger ($23.00); Leopard II Improved ($23.00); Soviet T-34 ($17.50); and Naval Infantry ($9.00).

We have a little G2 on some of the releases. The Soviet stuff most likely will be Zvesda produced items like the BT-5. The JSII appears to be the post-war version with the rounded fenders.

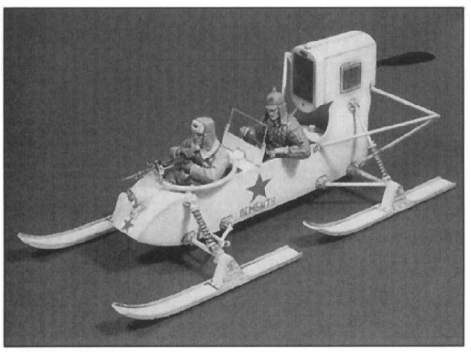
The M923A1 is the big post-war U.S. cargo truck. The Panzerwerfer will be based on the Opel Maultier, as it shares the same under-carriage and drive train. The Jagdpanther is the logical extension of their just released Panther A.

The Ferdinand looks like it's going to be the Tiger P; the Porsche prototype version of the famous heavy tank.

The German tank accessories will include a squeeze-bore artillery piece.

### Kirin

In the Kirin line things are really buzzing along. Two Zimmerit conversion kits for the Tamiya Tiger IIs are now available. These two items (one each for the Henschel and Porsche versions) come with replacement turrets, upper hulls and mantlets. If our information is correct, both these will be an exceptional value for the buck at $19.98 each.



One new item we are particularly excited about is Kirin's 1/35th scale Soviet Aerosan motorized ski sled. Some of you may be familiar with Lead Sled Model's enclosed cab version of last year. Kirin's resin, plastic and brass version is a two-seater model, the RF-8. Two fantastic little figures will also be available and are specifically designed to fit neatly into the two crew positions. The retail on the sled is $29.98, and the figures will sell for $14.98. Cool, cool, cool.

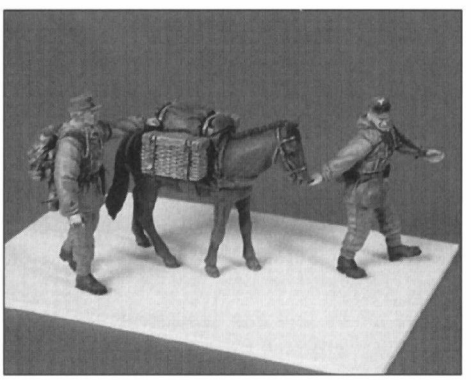
Speaking of figures, Kirin continues its 120mm figure line with a Soviet Naval Infantryman ($29.98). Designed by Bill Chilstrom, this figure appears to have been inspired by Andrew Mollo's well known illustrated volume on WWII uniforms.

The second release is of a WWI Doughboy "Trench Raider." Designed by Brian Stewert, the figure is lively and well animated. The base is thoroughly detailed, complete with a deceased hand protruding through the soil! $29.98.

The third release is of a soldier of the US Army's 10th Mountain Division which served in Somalia. Designed by Mike Cusanelli, the figure is toting a Squad Automatic Weapon (SAW), and appears to represent the most current infantry gear and equipment. This figure is slightly larger than the first two, being listed as 150mm or 1/12th scale. $39.98.

In 1/35th scale, in addition to the Aerosan riders, a set of German WWII mountain troops is now available. The set includes two figures in the appropriate mountain garb and a pack mule loaded for bear. This set would make a neat little vignette, perhaps with the new Hasegawa Kübelwagen? The set retails for $19.98.

Kirin has announced, but not yet set a price for, three 1/35th scale diorama modules. There are two sections of a large stone bridge and part of a country road

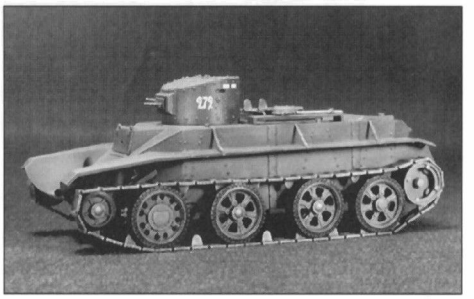


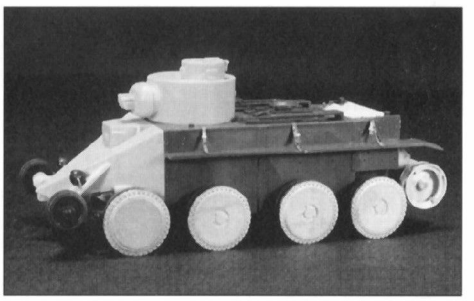
represented. It appears these can be used individually, or together to form a continuous scene.

### MB Models

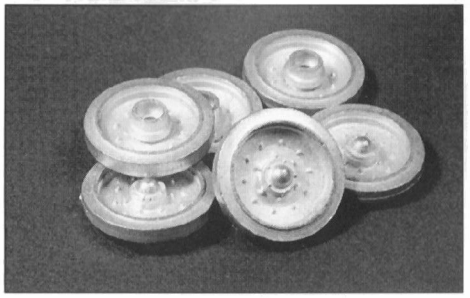
MB Models had several surprises for us. The following new items are all now available: A Panzer IV B/C conversion. This kit contains resin turret, upper hull, and rear hull plate. It also contains virtually the entire running gear in white metal. The package is topped off with the Italeri kit! All for $85.00. This kit is said to be a limited edition, with production held to probably about 300 units.

MB also has two new conversion kits for the Italeri BT-5. The first is a BT-2, with resin and white metal parts to back date the BT-5 ($40.00). The second is a Christie conversion, which backdates the BT-5 to the original variant of the line ($45.00). Both kits are composed of a resin replacement nose and turret, white metal roadwheels and other parts, along with a resin drop-in tranny unit.





Continuing the Soviet theme is a set of white metal T-34 late pattern solid rubber road wheels. These are the type without the inner hub ring. They were seen on late war and Korean War T-34s and assault guns, $17.95. Soviet webbed wheels will also be available.



Molded in white metal, these wheels can be used for T-55s, T-62s and T-34Ms.

For you Maus fans (The Men Of Mice) MB now has a set of pierced roadwheels designed to replace the solid types found on the DML kit. Certain photos show the Maus with the pierced rather than the solid type (see MMiR Vol. 1, No. 1). Retail for the wheels will be about $20.00.

The Soviet howitzer is still on line from MB. The release date has been pushed back slightly to early April.

### Minicraft Models

Minicraft is keeping up the steam with even more new releases in 1994. This is what the list looks like so far: February, March and April; M-113 tracks, Panzer IV tracks and the IDF M60A1 with Blazer. May through August:

IDF Merkava II with mine roller; and Tiger I tracks. September through December: Merkava II; M-163 Vulcan; M-981 FIST V; M-998 Cargo Truck; and get this: a British Warrior Mark V APC AND a M26 Pershing (hubba, hubba!). The prices and precise release dates are all to be announced.

We don't know too much about these kits, although we have seen photos of the M60 and the Merkava with the mine roller. They both looked pretty good. We'll repeat this list during the year and report as each kit becomes available.

### Model Kasten

Model Kasten is threatening to release more in its series of pinned and functional track link sets. Tiger II, ZSU-23, JSII and Panther (early and late). All very nice but o-so expensive. Each set is around sixty clams.

### Panzer Concepts

The U.S. company Panzer Concepts sort of snuck up on us. We had previously seen their conversion and interior sets for the Sherman, and they all were of very high quality.

One item we were particularly charged up about was their 1/35th scale Dragon Wagon tank recovery vehicle. We had a chance to take a quick peek at this back at the IPMS Nationals in Atlanta. We recently had an opportunity to take a closer look and we were as impressed as we were the first time! This baby is a knockout. The entire tractor is molded in resin, with the chain drives being represented in photo-etched brass. The kit makes just the M25 tractor, the M15 trailer being planned as a future release. As you'd expect, the kit will set you back a bit—about $185.00. Look for a review of this item in an upcoming MMiR.

Panzer Concepts has also started a series of other tank interiors (great idea). The first is the T-34 (available now, $28.00), and Tiger I, II, Panzer II, IV and Panther are to follow. Prices to be announced.

Panzer Concepts plans the release of a flatbed rail car to entrain a Tiger I. $80.00. Pretty neat really, think about three or four in row with all the Model Kasten early Tiger goodies installed...

The Panzer Concepts items have been rare in hobby shops. If you're not having any luck locally, check with VLS, as they are known to stock most of the range.

### Tamiya

Tamiya has announced the imminent re-release of some of its older Soviet WWII items like the GAZ jeep and the KV series, along with the SU-85 and the SU-122 assault guns.

The new Panther should be in the stores by the time you read this. Several variants of the Panther are planned. A late G with steel wheels is due out this summer. Apparently, the Tiger and the Panther were part of a single project at Tamiya. This indicates that we will see other items in this line.

The Panther will be provided with accessory items as the Tiger II was. Individual track links, brass rounds and photo-etched parts will all eventually be made available.

Tamiya is also planning to release a 1/16th scale Porsche turret for use on its RC Tiger II.

We have no absolute conformation yet about any impending release of a Sherman. Rumors regarding the release of a Firefly or a M51 are just that. It probably is fairly certain some type of Sherman kit will be released this year. Stay tuned...

### Verlinden Productions and VLS

VP seems to be re-shoring certain aspects of its 1/35th scale line. In addition to various new figures sets, there are several updated accessory items. For example, their #874, Lamp posts & Lanterns, contains more useful types, and duplicates of the individual pieces. This concept is expanded with #875, Street and Road Accessories, which contains more items for enhancing street scenes.

The big news for us, was the announcement of a 15cm howitzer from VP. This piece comes with the protze (that's *limber* to you) and a large sheet of brass. This kit should be nice, given the Verlinden reputation for casting quality. It will also be a bargain at $89.95, compared to its nearest competition which weights in at $225.00.

Among the lines that VLS is representing, one in particular caught our eye: Alexander the Great. Among many 1/35th printed accessory items are various flags made of cloth. We haven't seen these yet but they sound interesting. We'll provide more information as it comes to light.

As we've said before, keeping up with these guys is like running after a freight train. To get all the latest skinny, write to: VLS, Lone Star Industrial Park, Lone Star Industrial Drive, O'Fallon, MO 63366.

## Other Stuff

### Canadian Modeling Exposition

We received information about this event a short time ago. Scheduled for July 15 & 16, it appears that it will be a pretty big deal. If you are up that way, or can't make it to the IPMS Nationals, Toronto is a fabulous (and safe) city, and especially nice at that time of year. For more information contact Garfield Ingram, 18 Elsfield Road, Toronto, Canada M8V 3R4. Or call: 416-239-9740.

### Armored Car

We have received a very interesting newsletter called: *Armored Car, The Wheeled Fighting Vehicle Journal.* This twelve page newsletter is published bi-monthly, and as you would guess, deals exclusively with wheeled AFV's.

There's more information packed in its twelve pages than we've seen in some 100 hundred page books! We were particularly fascinated with the story about U.S. M3 halftracks being converted into six-wheeled armored cars. This was apparently done in the mid-forties at Fort McNair outside of Washington. The full story, including plans is recounted in Issue #19.

Back issues are available (#2-18; $2.00, #19-on; $3.00), and orders or information requests should be directed to: Armored Car, 556 North Third Street, Woodburn, OR 97071-3904, U.S.A.

## What's on the Tubage

We're looking for **The Military Channel** to pop up on our cable network soon. We've heard it's being put together by the folks at the Art & Entertainment network. This will supposedly be 24 hours a day of documentaries, weapons shows, etc. Talk about a geek-fest.

This sort of reminds us of a piece that ran in *Spy* magazine. In an article they poked fun at A&E for running so many shows about World War II and the Nazis. They jokingly suggest a station that ran nothing but that, nick-named "HTV;" Hitler TV. They also suggested the appropriate MTV-type slogan: "All Hitler, all the time." Life imitates art, or something like that.

If anyone has any information about The Military Channel, drop us a line.

If you get a chance, check out Clint Eastwood's latest video release; **In the Line of Fire.** The movie is about a grizzled old Secret Service agent (played by Clint) on the trail of a potential presidential assassin.

The funny part is that the assassin (wonderfully played by John Malkevich) is a modeler. He comes up with a few uses for resin and RTV that most of you probably never thought of. Clint Eastwood's comment to his on-screen partner that: "...modeling; it's a strange subculture" will probably get a giggle of out most. This is also interesting as Mr. Eastwood is rumored to be a modeler and he may have been goofing on himself a little here. Look for it at a video store near you.

You are not likely to find anything from **Vintage Videos** in your local shop. VV are purveyors of tapes on a wide range of historical subjects, including military vehicles. We had a chance to view their tape on the M16 Multiple MG Mount. This was the quad .50 cal. mount on the M3 halftrack. The tape is the actual training film shown to the crews of the M16 during the war. The footage covers everything you could ever ask for (and then some). As a training/demonstration film it illustrates all aspects of the weapon in great detail.

Many other tapes are available, and a catalog can be ordered from: Vintage Videos, P.O. Box 551, Greencastle, PA 17225. They take credit cards and orders can be phoned in at: (717) 597-9695.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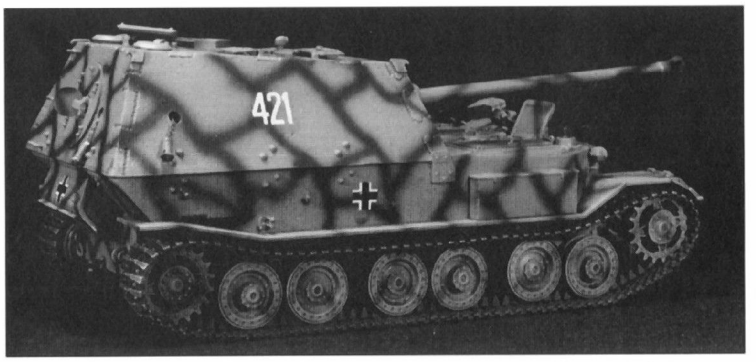

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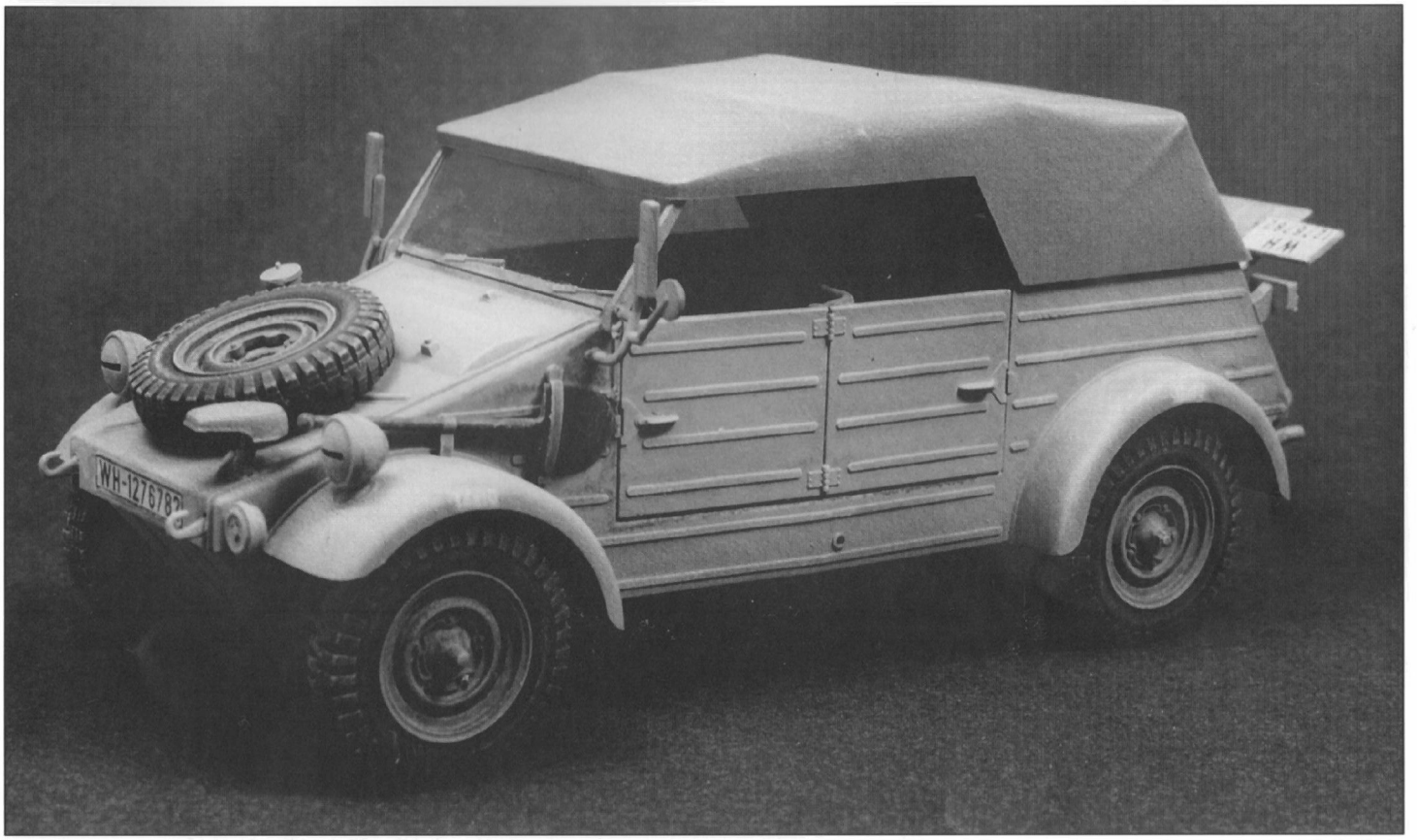
# Kubel-Mania

## Hasegawa kicks the bucket in 1/35th scale



*The diminitive Kubel from Hasegawa, seen here about twice its actual size.*

HASEGAWA HASN'T BEEN INVOLVED much in the 1/35th scale scene (remember the 1/35th scale Germans and Marines?). They were once well known for their small scale stuff, and modelers in that genre still find those kits popular. Hasegawa's first foray into 35th scale vehicles is officially this here little Kübelwagen.

Billed as a Type 82 "Bego" version, this kit represents the bucket car that saw service on all fronts during the war. The Type 82 was the original version and the Type 166 was the amphibious Schwimmwagen. I'm not sure exactly what Bego means.

The kit is composed of four sprues of gray molded plastic and one sprue of clear parts. The clear parts include two sets of goggles and two wine bottles in addition to the parts for the windshield and side curtains. A decal sheet is enclosed which provides the choice of three different marking options, as well as separate numbers for creating your own unique vehicle registration number. Additional unit markings are provided for both Army and SS units.

A single sheet of instructions is laid out entirely with exploded view drawings. The model is designed to build into a Kubel with the top in a fixed position. It also contains a detailed engine with a positionable hatch.

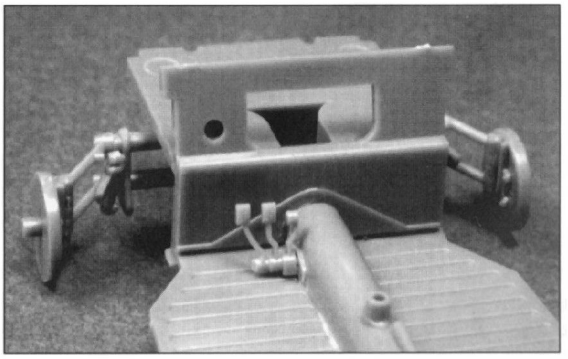
### Konstruct A Kubel

Building this little guy is pretty simple. There's not really much to it, in terms of size—it's little! There are quite a few parts, but each builds into small sub-assemblies which in turn make up the finished model.

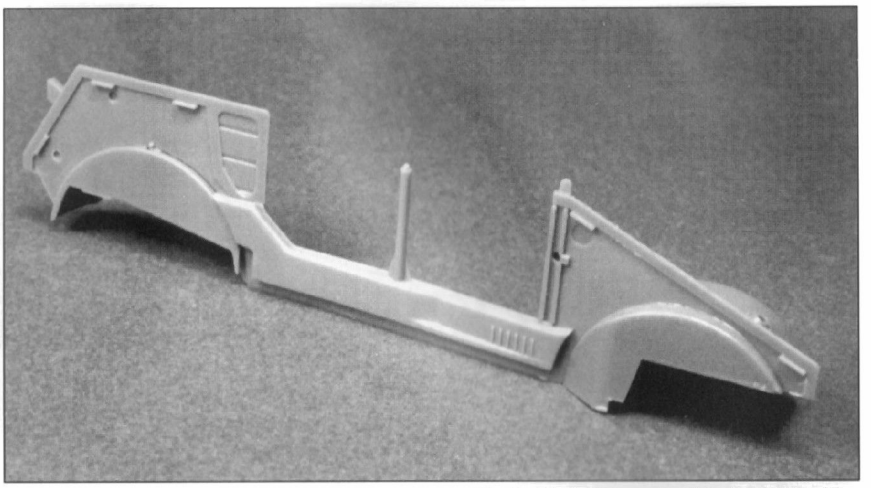
The body is broken up into separate panels, sides, floor, hood (bonnet?) and back end. I encountered no fit problems at all and flash was almost non-existent. All of the parts were very well molded. The gas, clutch, and brake pedals, for instance, were exquisite. The undercarriage is also fully detailed and even the CV joint rubber boots are rendered!

The fenders are individual pieces and care should be taken to distinguish the left and right sides. These pieces form a very realistic seam were they meet the body. There's no trouble mixing up the wheels, as each is marked on the inside edge: F or R (front or rear). Neato mosquito.

I made right and left side sub-panels which were composed of the inner and outer



*The clutch, brake and gas pedals. Also, note the front suspension and steering gear.*



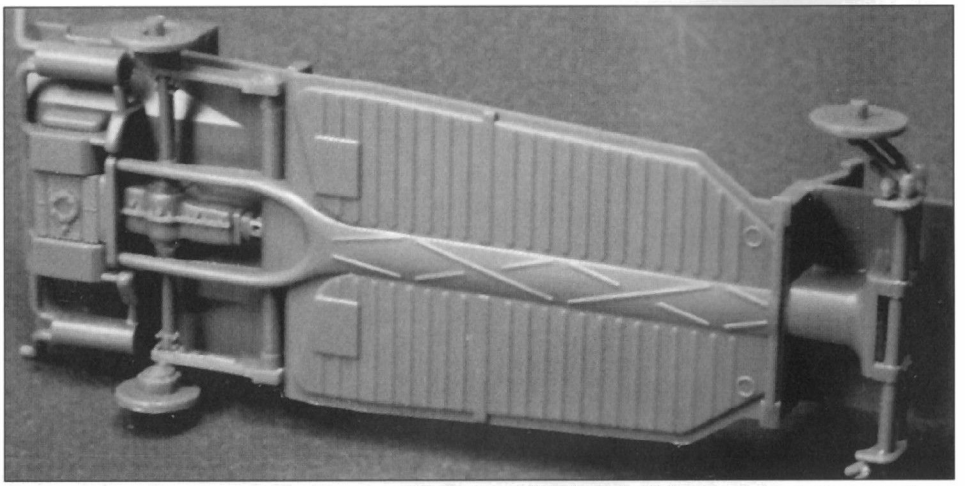
*The inside body panel—this is the left side.*

sides, and the fenders. I made all the sub-assemblies, including the engine, until step eight. Then I stopped to begin painting. Many parts of the vehicle would be inaccessible after the body is all together.

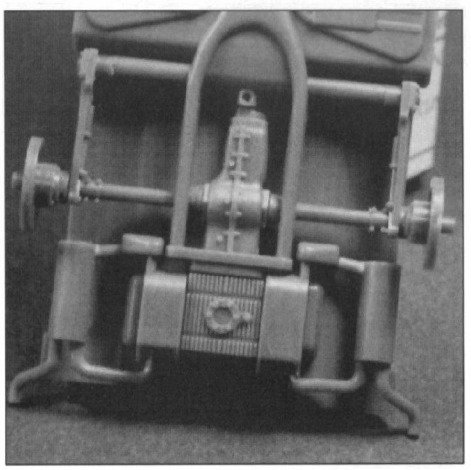
I chose a post 1943 paint scheme for my bucket of dark yellow overall. I used Floquil Mud mixed with a little white for this. I sprayed the interior side walls and the undercarriage, as well as the engine compartment. I then hand-painted all of the interior parts. The seats were painted a light dusty brown to represent canvas. I painted the dashboard dark yellow and picked out the knobs in black. I dry-brushed the main gauge with white to highlight the numbers and put a drop of gloss varnish into it when it was dry.

I weathered the interior with thin washes of black acrylic paint to give it that lived-in look. I used pastels on the seats to make them look "canvasy."

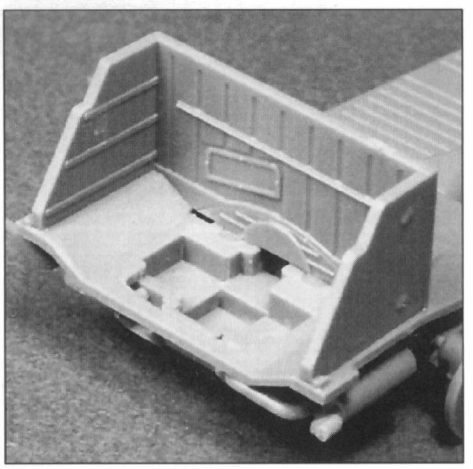
I also hand-painted the engine with dark gray and black, using the photos that accompany this article as a reference. Some of the hoses had a bit of a sheen, so a coated them with Micro Scale Micro Satin. The engine was set aside to dry.



*The bottom of the bucket. All that's missing is the brake lines.*



*The bottom of the engine and transmission.*

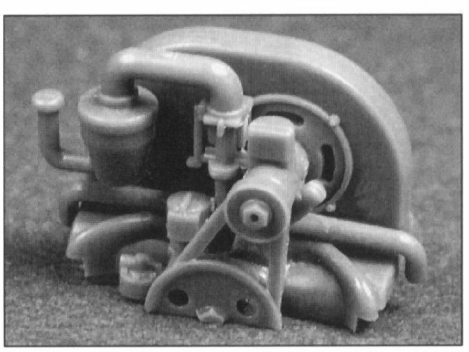


*The empty engine compartment.*

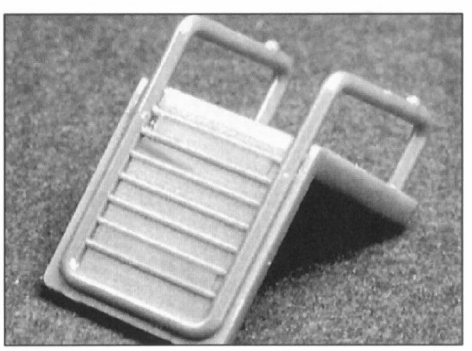
### Build, Spray, Build, Spray

After the interior had dried, I assembled the rest of the body panels and installed the engine. The fit was absolutely fabulous. All of the panels aligned perfectly. Once all of the parts were in place and had a chance to set up a little, I added all of the smaller bits like the headlights, tow hooks, siren and the Notek light. I left the shovel, wheels, and of course the top, off at this point. Then, I sprayed the entire vehicle with my dark yellow mixture. I tucked tissue paper into the cockpit and the engine compartment to shield these areas from the exterior paint job.

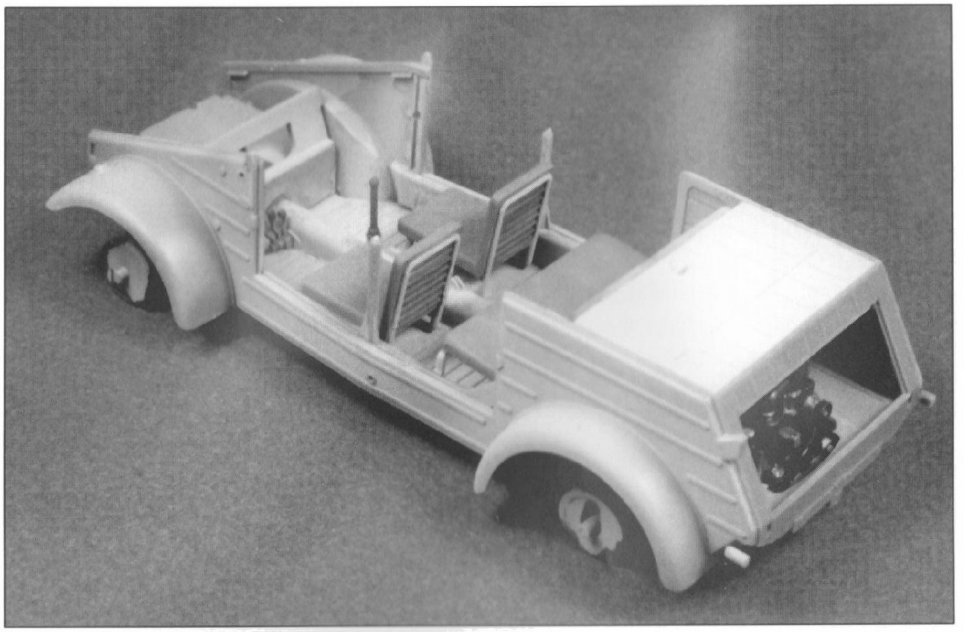
I gave the canvas top a shot of dark brown with light oversprays of gray-brown. When it was dry, I installed the back clear window part with white glue. As I mentioned,



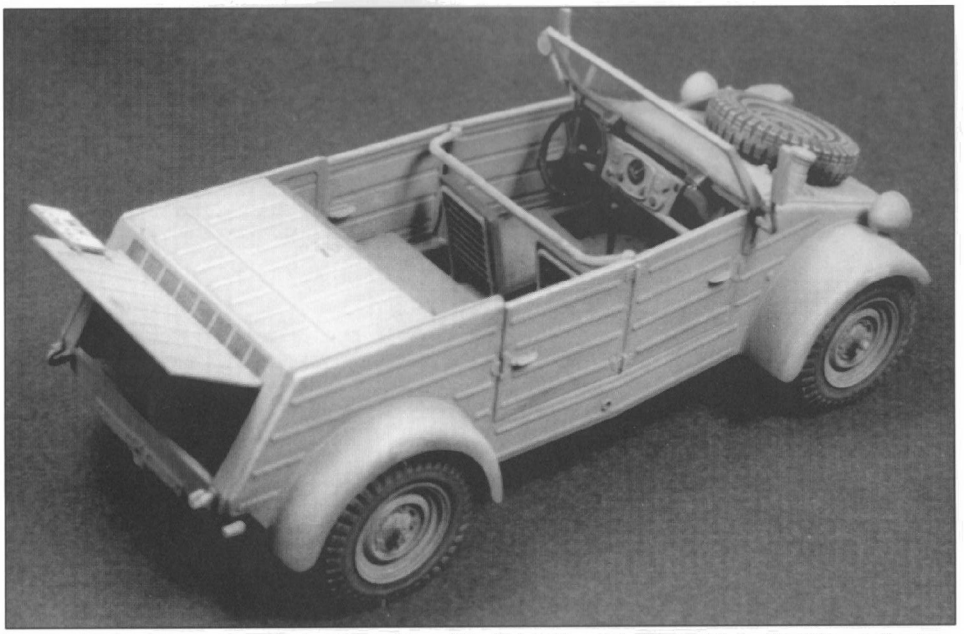
*If only the engine was really this big!*



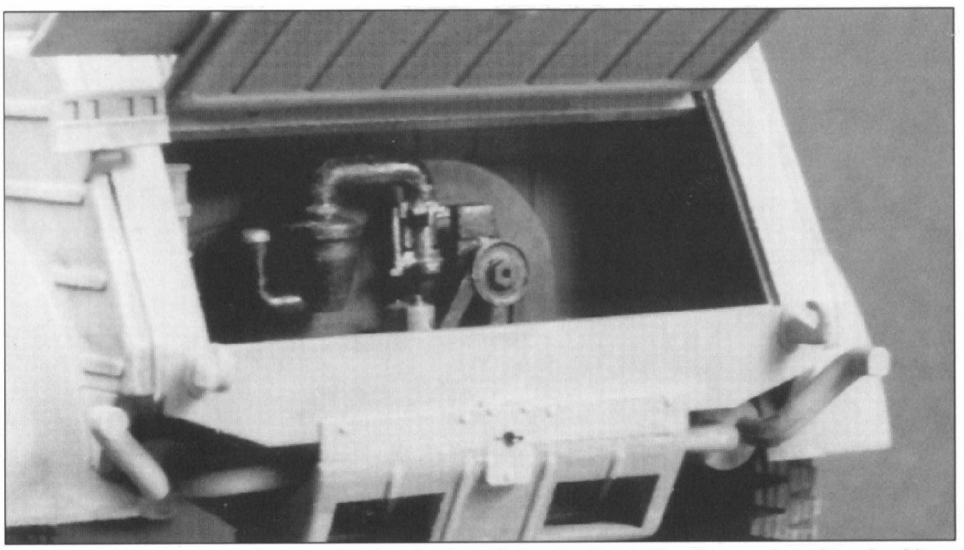
*The bottom seat rails are separate pieces.*



*The finished and partially painted body. The engine has been painted and installed.*



*Overall view from above of the finished model. The dashboard is of the earlier type.*



*The completed engine installed and painted. There's room for a few other bits...*

clear parts are included for the side curtains, but I opted to leave these off my model so you could see the interior a little better.

Before painting the tires dark gray, I knocked down the bottoms with a file a little to show the Kubel's weight. This is really the only modification I made to the kit.

I masked off the windshield with liquid mask and after the paint had dried, and the mask was removed, I installed the wiper motors. These were painted black. The windshield was a very tight fit on the body, but it eventually popped in. The wiper motors were a nice touch.

I used the kit's decals and they were pretty good. I applied them using Micro Set. I just used the registration plates and the tire pressure labels. Humbrol Flat dulled them down.

The wheels were added with white glue and the whole car was dry-brushed with light gray. Pastels were applied to the top and the tires.

### I Spoil A Good Time

This was a very, very nice kit. It is well researched and highly accurate according to plans in Motorbuch's Kübelwagen book. What's the catch? Well, the thing costs twenty-two bucks for starters. In my opinion, this creates two problems. Number one is that many of you will pass up this fine kit because it's just too darn much money. Number two is that many will say: "I liked this kit the first time I built it—when it was called: Italeri." That's right, they have had a Kubel on the market for many years, and again, most guys will want to pass this one up for the older kit. Especially since the Italeri kit sells for about eight dollars.

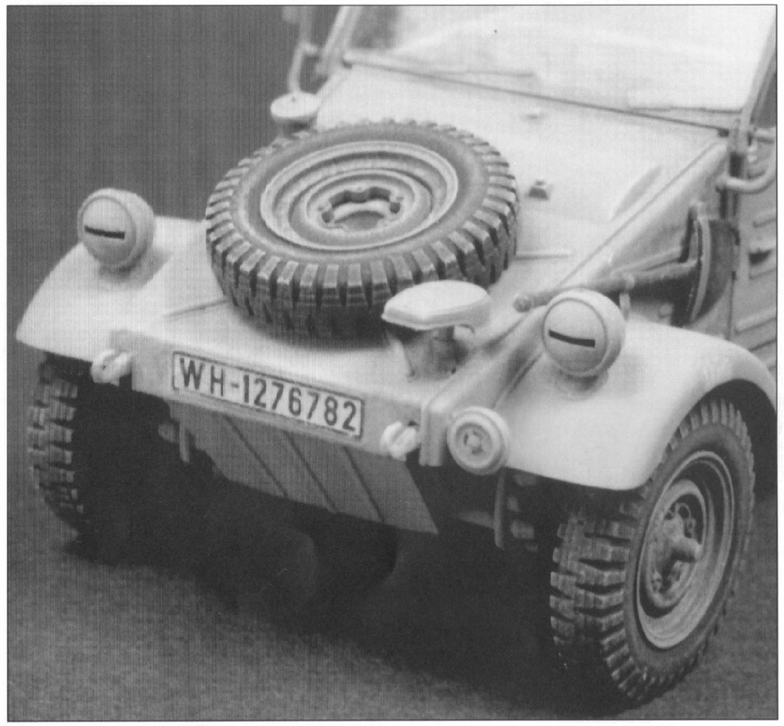
Well, don't let Hasegawa's poor planning get in the way of your modeling pleasure. I took the time to compare the two kits in depth, and I must say the Hasegawa one is superior in all respects. It definitely represents all of the most current molding and engraving technology. Its obvious drawback is the price. I thought the sting could have been lessened somewhat if a sheet of photo etched brass had been included. It also would have helped to have the option of showing the Kubel with the canvas top down.

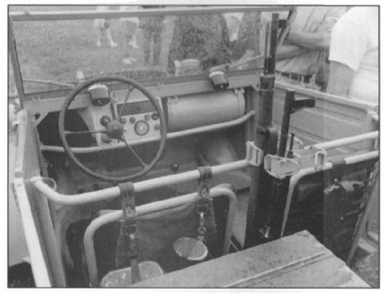
The aforementioned brass is available from Show Model in a sheet that was originally intended for the Italeri kit. I briefly compared the sheet with this kit and it appears that most of the parts would fit.

Most significant is the folded frame for the top and all of the little hooks and stuff that go around the rear deck. You also get a multi-part assembly for replacing the windshield. Adding all this would definitely give you a "Show Model." There are plenty of other super detailing options, like wiring the wiper motors, adding the brake lines, engine wiring, etc. I have also noticed that in many photos Kubels tend to ride a bit low. This was due, no doubt, to the "gentle" driving habits of its users, who probably pretty much bashed the living crap out of the suspension. It seems that it would be fairly easy to obtain this effect by gently bending around the various suspension components.

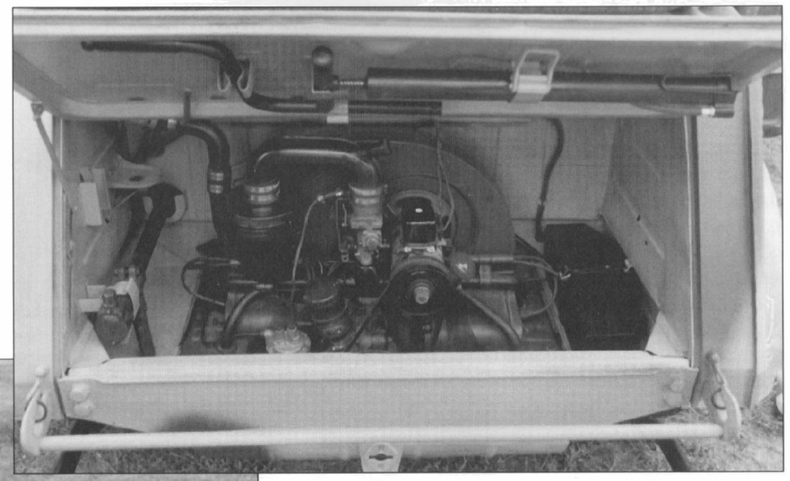
To wrap it up, I am going to recommend this kit, especially to German armor geeks. I would also recommend that you shop around a little first as the kit is available in some places for less that its $22.00 suggested retail. Most importantly, if the price really bugs you don't hesitate to write the manufacturer. I think most companies want our input. After all, they want to sell their products, not sit on them!

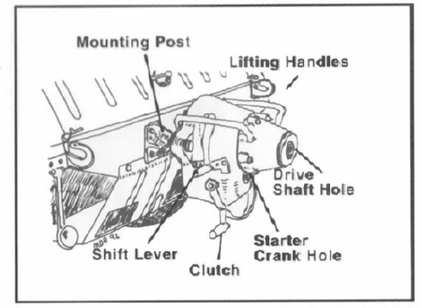
*—Ken Dugan*



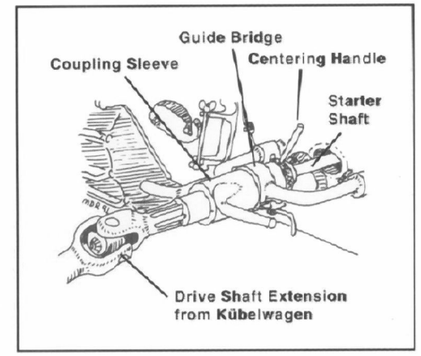


**The vehicle illustrated on theses pages is a completely restored, contemporary vehicle. In the photo directly above and to the right, the later style instrument panel can been seen. In the very top photo, note the way the top is attached to the body via a series of small straps. The photo at right shows a factory fresh engine compartment. Note the jack, pump and tool box.**






Drawings by Mike Roof




**Kübelwagen Inertia Starter**
For cold starting tank engines.
Seen here fitted to a Panther

**On this page: Top left; the floor of the vehicle showing the wooden slats commonly found in the Kübelwagen. These were also a regular feature in post war Beetles for many years. Bottom right; the right-side top mechanism. The moving parts were all flat stampings and the actual bows were made from hollow steel rod.**

Kübelwagen photos courtesy of E. Smith

## MMiR RECCE

**Hasegawa Kübelwagen Type 82.** Kit number HB1 2400. Purchased from Warrick Custom Hobbies. 1025 South University Drive, Plantation FL 33324. Price was $21.98 plus local tax.

**References**

*VW at War, Book 1 and 2.* German Trucks and Cars in WWII. Schiffer Publishing. These inexpensive books ($7.95 each) provide excellent photos of the Kubel and the Schimmwagen. Available were Schiffer books are sold.

*Der VW Kübelwagen im Zweiten Weltkrieg.* By Janusz Piekalkiewicz, Motorbuch Verlag. Another in Motorbuch's exhaustive series on German vehicles. Covers all phases the Kubel's development and deployment. Published only in German. Check your Motorbuch dealer. One we know of is: Elite Military Booksellers; P.O. Box 6145, Americus Georgia. 31709. (912) 928-3040.

# Two Guys Named Joe

## We get up-close and personal with the DML and the MB Models JS II Heavy Tanks

Here's a look at these two new Joes, one in resin the other in plastic. We'll look at each guy separately, then compare.

### DML JSII

The JS II has probably been the most anticipated plastic kit of the last few years. Rumors flew about its impending release from Tamiya at one time, but that wasn't even true for a second.

Well along comes DML, and there you have it. DML has learned a few lessons over the years and their experience is starting to show.

DML's JSII is the earlier model and it's packaged in a large box with the customary Volstad painting. The kit is composed of 7 large sprue trees. 5 are molded in DML's familiar gray plastic, while 2 of these sprues are of the link-to-link tracks and are molded in a dark gray metallic-type plastic.

### Build That Bad-Boy

I generally followed the instruction's assembly sequence and I used both Testors liquid glue and super glue for construction.

Like just about any tank kit, you start by putting together lots of wheels. Each bogie wheel has a separate hub, which at first struck me as odd. Then I realized that the separate pieces very accurately represents the thin hub-lip seen on the real vehicle. Nice touch.

There are also hub pieces for the return rollers (these are somewhat thin as well). Be very careful with all of these parts. They're all just about scale thickness and very easy to damage—especially when removing them from the sprue.

The torsion arms mount onto the bottom of the hull (which is extensively detailed), much like on the Tamiya Tiger kits. The two banks of arms are staggered as any tank with torsion arms should be. Make sure all the arms are level. I turned my hull upside down, leveled the arms with a ruler, and let the whole thing dry overnight. Be careful of the placement of parts B12 & B14, the front torsion arm stabilizers. They are almost identical and the proper placement of them is essential to keep the forward arms level.

All the roadwheels were a near perfect fit. They don't turn when installed, but this is only helps if vinyl tracks are to be installed —you know, the ol' rollover. The size of the roadwheels struck me as a little small, but more on that later.

Be sure to add part B29 at the same time as the drive sprocket, so it will fit into the space between the two sprocket halves. On the actual tank, this part was used to clear glop and/or muck from the inner sprocket that would have eventually fouled the suspension. Before you finish the running gear, check out some of the beautifully molded weld detail around the return roller and suspension arm lugs. Impressive.

I decided to assemble the tracks before adding the two hull halves. There is not enough clearance between the fenders and the return rollers for the tracks to be installed later. As I mentioned at the top, the tracks are link-to-link. The fit was surprisingly good. There was almost no additional flash, the links pressed together easily, and wouldn't come apart without a tug. I have fought with DML link-to-link in the past, so these were a pleasant surprise. Use a sharp knife when removing the tracks from the sprue and you'll have hardly any clean up at all. The knock-out points (inevitable in any plastic kit) appear just to each side of the center horn on each link. This ensures that they'll be all but hidden by the roadwheels.

The instructions don't say exactly how many links to use for each side. I began by using them all from each sprue for a side, hoping

*The DML JS II*

*The MB Models JSII*

the more I used, the greater the characteristic saggy appearance I could achieve. It ended up being 84 for the left side, 82 for the right.

I made two long sections first (using Testors liquid glue), then I began attaching the first one around the sprocket, about 2 inches down on the length. The next section went around the front idler wheels and over the top rollers. I formed the droop in the track and mated the links just before the third roller. This is where I added or subtracted links to get the right sag. I left one link on the top and bottom unglued, so the track could be lifted off after the glue had set. No glue was applied to any part of the suspension itself.

When the tracks were dry, I lifted them off and painted them with a grayish-tan mixture. It's necessary to paint the lower hull at this stage too. I used a dark green mixed from Polly-S. I also painted the lower portions of the upper hull, especially under the fenders and were they meet the upper hull. The narrow clearance makes this next to impossible to do later.

I closed up the hull before I opened up the holes for the gun travel lock (A3). If you make this same mistake, hold the model up to a light with the turret off, and you'll see the lighter colored holes. Poke 'em out with a sharp X-acto. There are also holes to be opened in the front hull for the spare track blocks. I left these closed for fear I'd make them too large. I trimmed the backs of the blocks a little bit and installed them right against the hull.

The hull is covered with lots of cool little details. The tow hooks for instance, were finely detailed and even had their retainer clips as separate pieces. All of the factory fittings are present, like the horn, headlight, shovel, saw and holder, and two different size toolboxes. The larger of the two boxes even includes its attachment clips. I doubt that any JS retained many of these goodies in field, most pictures show them pretty much beat to heck. The only thing I didn't really care for were the convoy lights which dot the hull. They weren't formed as nicely as some of the other parts. The Tamiya T-62 and the ESCI T-55 have pretty good ones, if you want to filch those.

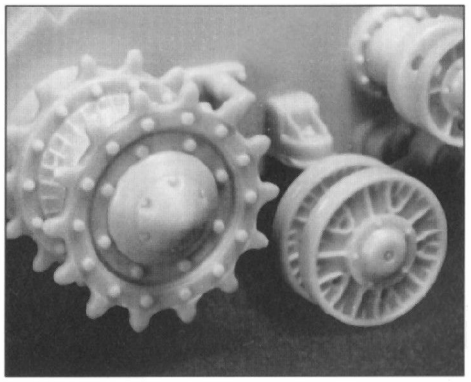
The rough cast surface of the hull is right on. The texture is very realistic and is especially convincing around the driver's visor. Good goin' dudes.

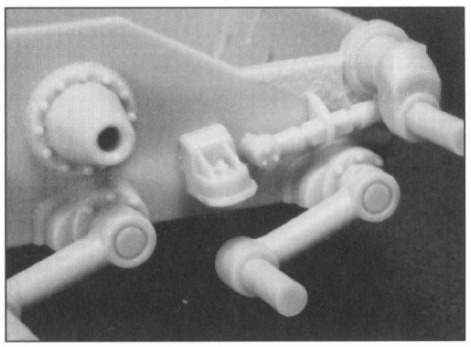
### Turrets Are Us

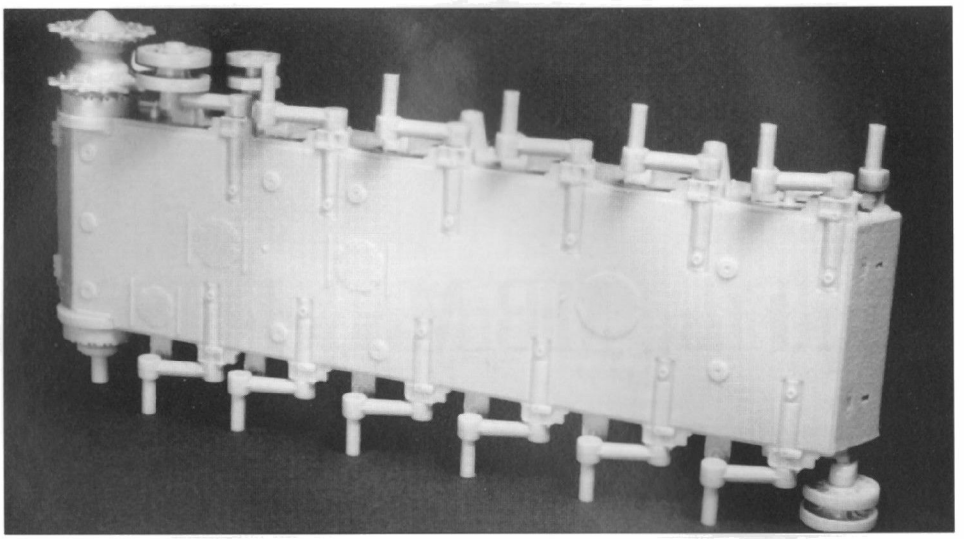
The turret on this bad boy is as good as it gets. The basic parts break-down just like the real tank and the halves even join together against molded-on weld beads. Like the hull, the rough cast texture is rendered to a T. The characteristic casting numbers are also present on the turret rear. There are even faint casting lines around the rear turret MG mount—don't be tempted to scrape them off, they belong there. The same is true for the commander's cupola. This was also two cast pieces joined together, just like the kit parts, and it should have a seam around its circumference. Slots cut into the halves formed the visor openings.

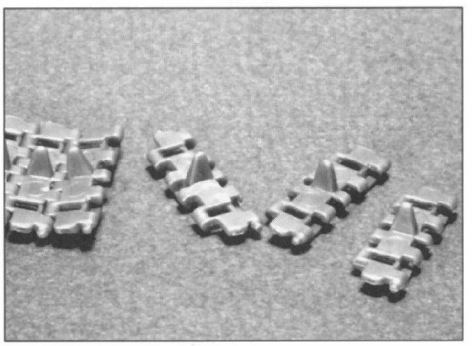
Both the commander's and the loader's hatches are fully detailed inside and out. The commander's hatch lacks its attached periscope, but one could be easily swiped from a Tamiya T-34. I also liked the complex spring assembly attached to the loader's hatch.

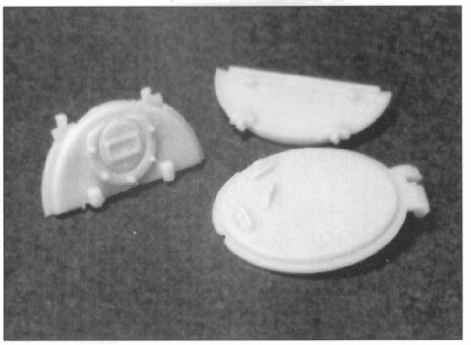
Covers for the periscopes on both the hull and the turret are provided, as are a few extras. I have seen pictures of these covers left off the vehicle. It's nice to have the choice, as you can see the periscope heads peeking out from under the covers, which is a spiffy little touch. You also get the choice











*Clockwise from the upper left: the drive sprocket and road wheels of the DML model; the bottom hull of the DML JS—some fantastic detailing; the insides of both turret hatches; the link-to-link track; and the finely detailed front idler mount.*

of two different types of scopes for the roof. The earlier "gumdrop" type and the flat type.

The gun and its muzzle brake are molded in two halves each. There were no fit problems with either, although the brake was missing its two prominent bolts.

The turret sides and rear are festooned with grab handles. There are very faint circles were they are located and extras are provided in case the carpet consumes them.

My one big gripe about the turret is that it does not clear the driver's periscopes. I don't know if the scopes are too high, or the turret is too low.

### Painting and Finishing

I painted my model overall dark green, which I mixed ahead of time using Polly-S black and dark green. I gave the entire vehicle two or three light coats of paint. I then went back over and sprayed a cloud pattern of light green. I lightly accentuated certain areas such as the gun mantlet, wheel hubs, turret bulge and hatches. It gives these areas a little more depth. I oversprayed a tan/gray mixture around the running gear and tracks. This helps to very slightly blend the color of the tracks with the rest of the tank.

It seems JSIIs either had very simple markings or very elaborate ones. I opted for simple, and used one of the kit's decals. I cut very close to the image and used Micro Set to adhere it. I sprayed the finished decal with very light tan to dull it down and make it matte.

After the paint cured for about 3 days, I applied a wash of black and burnt umber oil paint. This is a heavily thinned mixture, being more thinner than paint. I use Testors Model Master thinner because it doesn't craze the paint. The color of the wash was a little more brown than black, as I thought it would complement the green more effectively. The tracks received a black wash with just a touch of brown.

When the washes had dried for about 24 hours, I began dry-brushing with various shades of light green, tan and gray. I paid special attention to the textured areas of the hull and turret with the light green. This gives the effect of accenting the texture without altering its base color. I used the tans and grays on the tracks, suspension and lower hull.

### That Accuracy Thing

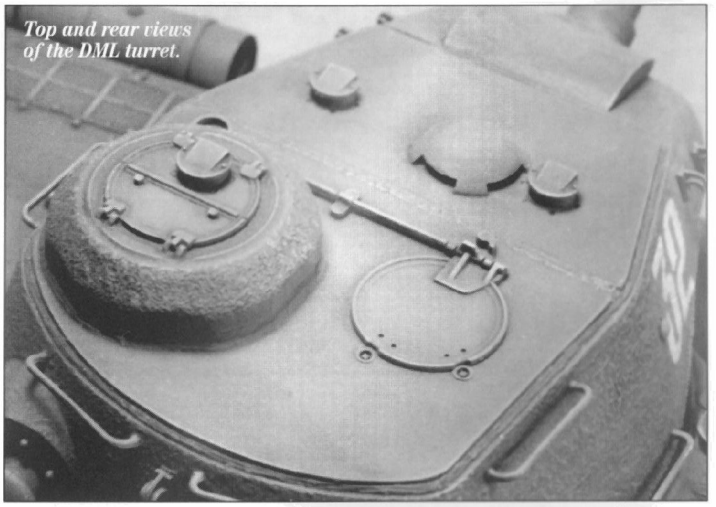
Accuracy is very important to some folks. But I have always thought: I'm not gonna get in and drive it away, so if it looks right, it's right. Right?

Well sort of. First things first, this is a very nice kit. The fit and finish are top notch, it builds well, it's full of well thought-out details, and it looks convincing for the most part when complete. There are a couple of problems though. Not the least of which is a good reliable source of information on the tank itself.

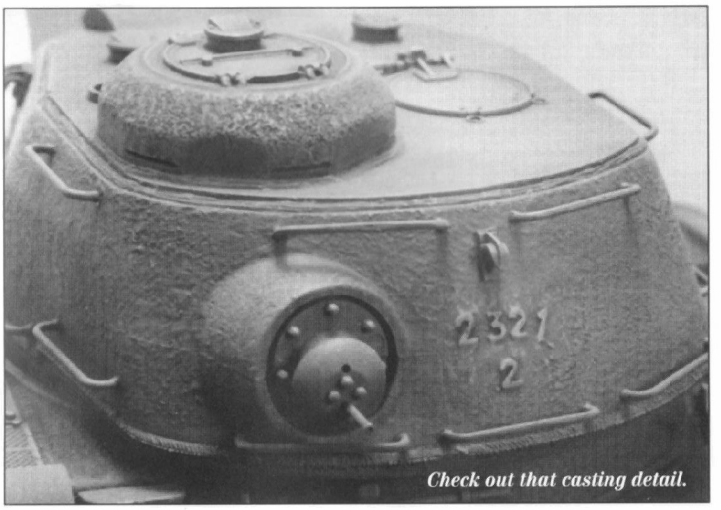
I checked over most, if not all, of the available information on this tank (see Recce). However, some of this stuff has been called into question lately. For example, the drawings of the JSII in Zaloga's *Soviet Heavy Tanks* have recently been stated not to be quite accurate by Mr. Zaloga himself. I have heard that this kit is based on a totally new set of drawings done by two designers from Japan. As far as I know, these drawings have not been published. And unfortunately, I didn't have access to a real JSII.

So where does this leave us? Well, I spent a considerable amount of time poring over photos of the vehicle. In the absence of a really reliable set of plans, the photos will have do. Based on no particular scientific principle, this is what I came up with:

The wheels. In spite of being wonderfully detailed and molded, they just look too small. I compared them with a roadwheel from the Tamiya KVII (see photo). The JSII was a cousin of the KV and I always assumed (correctly, I hope) that the wheels were either the same or very similar in size. The Tamiya KV wheels are much bigger. These



*Top and rear views of the DML turret.*




*Check out that casting detail.*

wheels compare about right to most of the plans I consulted. The difference is most noticeable when you visually compare the distance between the return rollers and the roadwheels. I get the impression that there should be less space on the kit.

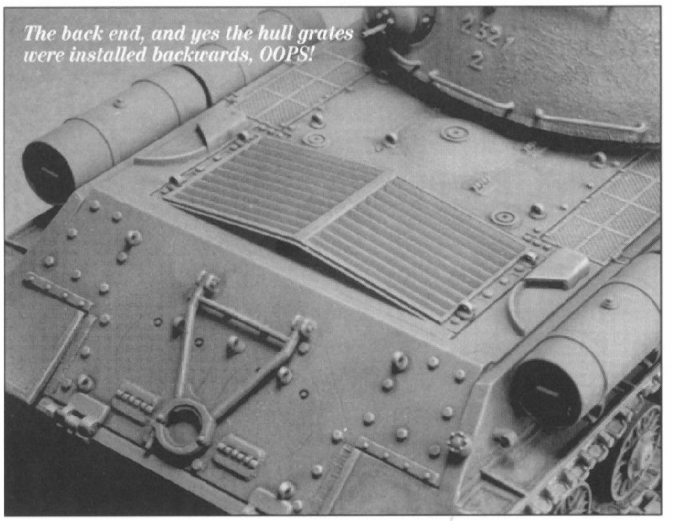
The other area I noticed was the depth of the hull. It seems too shallow. This is particularly noticeable above the tracks. There should be more clearance between the tops of the tracks and the bottoms of the fenders. This is also noticeable at the insides of the front fenders, where this area , I think, should be a little higher.

Taking these two things together, one gets the impression that this JSII is a bit small from the waist down.

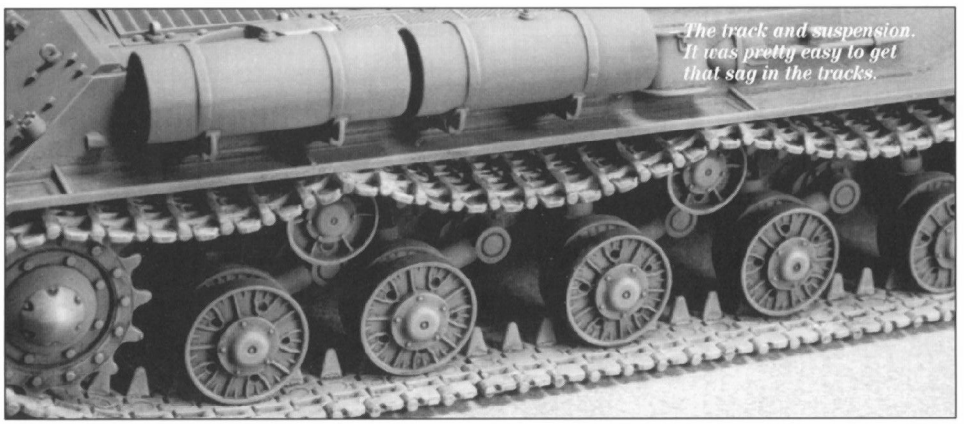
Is all this really relevant? I hate to even mention it, considering how nice the kit went together. I think it's strictly a matter of opinion. I'm happy with the kit. I felt it was a good value for the money. But still, this is a review after all, and people do want to know.

If you are bent on buying and fixing, I think the hull would be fairly easy to shim with plastic strip. The trickiest part would be the back, where the lower hull plate would have to be lengthened slightly. To fix the wheels, you could modify the Tamiya KV wheel (the face pattern is different) and install those. They fit perfectly, by the way. It looks like the axle would just need to be shortened by about an eighth of an inch. Or not. I think you'll still enjoy this kit either way, and I encourage everyone to make their own decision based on the available data.

*The front end of the DML kit.*




*The back end, and yes the hull grates were installed backwards, OOPS!*

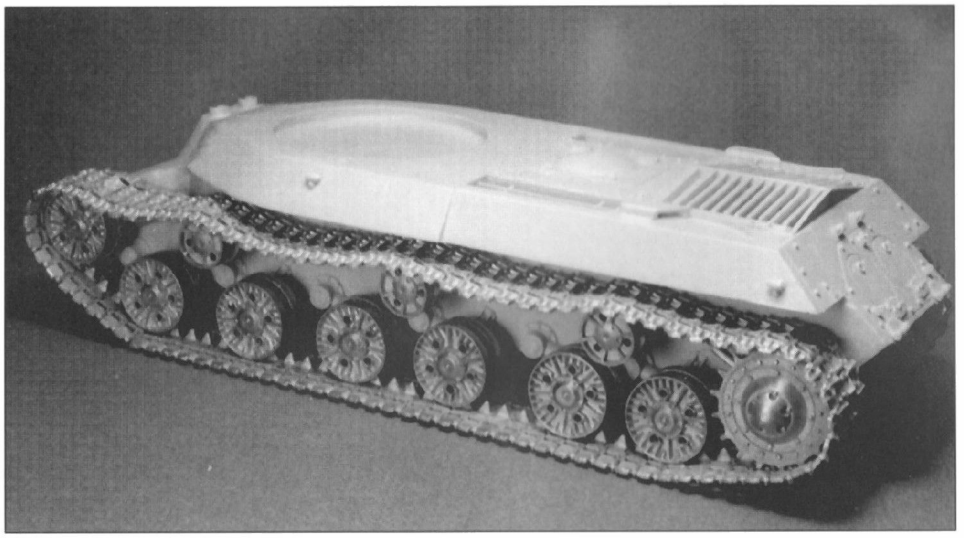


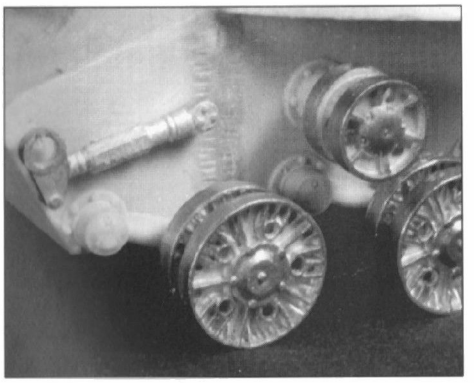
*The track and suspension. It was pretty easy to get that sag in the tracks.*

We'll discuss the accuracy of both kits more later on, but let's tackle the MB beast next...

### The MB Joe

The MB JSII is a "cottage-industry" multi-media kit. It is packaged in an attractive dark green box adored with a color photo. The kit itself is composed of two good size chunks of resin, a large sheet of photo-etched brass, white metal parts, brass wire, braided copper cable and plastic strip. A four-page instruction sheet is illustrated with photos of the model under construction. Photos of a real JSII are also included.





*Left: the completed track and suspension on the MB kit. At this point it weighed a good three pounds. Above: the front idler arm. The hole on the left is were the road wheel goes. Note the weld bead.*

Two versions of the JS are available from MB; the JSII and the JSIIm. I built the same version as the DML kit, the JSII. I used superglue and Zap-A-Gap accelerator throughout all phases of construction.

### Running Gear

As with most resin kits, the basic assembly is pretty simple. It seems most of the time spent on such kits is adding the smaller detail parts. This kit is no exception. After removing the over pour from the hull nose piece and the main hull, I just glued them together. Viola! Instant tank hull.

I used a grinding bit mounted in my moto-tool to remove the over-pour. This works well for the impatient modeler (like me). I went a little nuts though, and messed up the joint somewhat. I fixed it with AB epoxy putty. I applied it around the joint and formed the significant weld bead that also ran around this area. Some photos show this as very roughly done.

Next, I began work on the roadwheels and return rollers—all of which are molded in white metal. There was some clean-up necessary. I used a file and a brass wire brush. I spent a fair amount of time filing and brushing, but probably about the same amount of time that you'd spend cleaning up plastic wheels. Be careful when aligning the roadwheels halves, I didn't realize it at first, but the lightening holes on both sides should line up.

The wheels mount into hub lugs molded into the lower hull. Small indentations are present in the hubs, but the receiving holes must be drilled out. I didn't have a drill-bit big enough for the wheel, so I enlarged the holes by twirling in my X-acto knife, then finishing them off with a round file. The drill would have definitely worked better, but this method worked in a pinch.

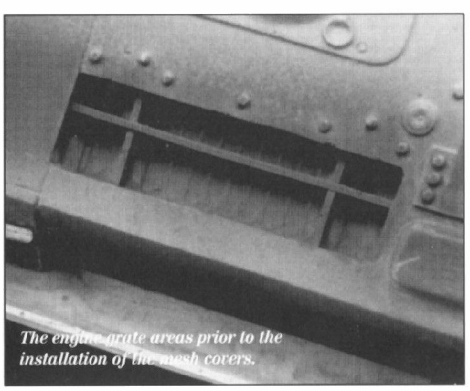
The drive sprocket and the return rollers mount right into prepared positions and required no drilling. The front idler arm was a bit tricky to position, as it had no locating mark. I mounted a roadwheel in it and then estimated its placement. There's a pin on the back and I marked its location with a pencil, then drilled out a hole for it. I left both arms unglued, so that they would swing up and down slightly. This helped later to gauge the correct height of the idler while installing the tracks and fenders.

The fenders are pretty neat. They are solid brass and right about scale thickness. The outside lip must be carefully folded up along its entire length. This might get a little dicey without a proper pair of flat-nosed pliers. A good quality modeler's vice might also be helpful.

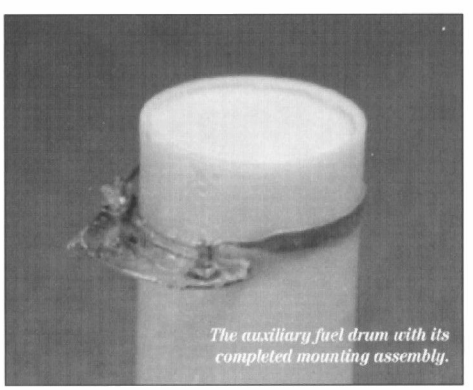
Once the lip is finished, you must bend down the front of the fender to create its characteristic curve. The instructions recommend heating (cool people call this annealing) the fenders in this area before bending. I have never done this before and I wasn't sure the up-turned lip would follow the bend. I went at it slowly and it actually worked quite well. I used an ordinary house candle as a heat source.

Two small tabs help keep the top of the fender attached to the front side panel. I ran high viscosity super glue into the joint from behind and then hit it with the Zap-A-Gap. The resulting joint was strong enough to be filed and realistically rounded. I have never soldered brass parts before, but it strikes me that this area would benefit from soldering. Especially if you want to really bang up the front fender area. You might need the stronger joint for that.

The rear fender panel bends down to match the contour of the back hull, but I left it straight, as I planned to install the fenders after I built the tracks. Keeping the fenders straight in back made it easier to slide them over the finished tracks.



*The engine grate areas prior to the installation of the mesh covers.*

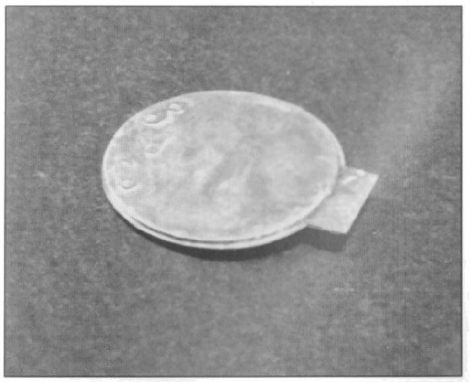


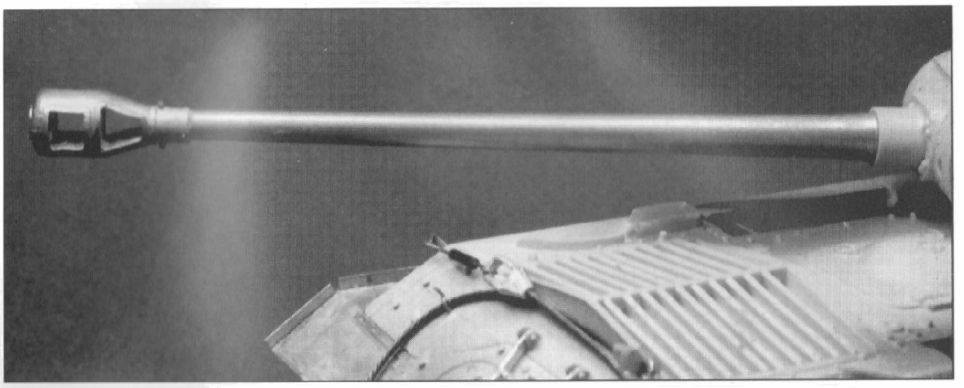
*The auxiliary fuel drum with its completed mounting assembly.*

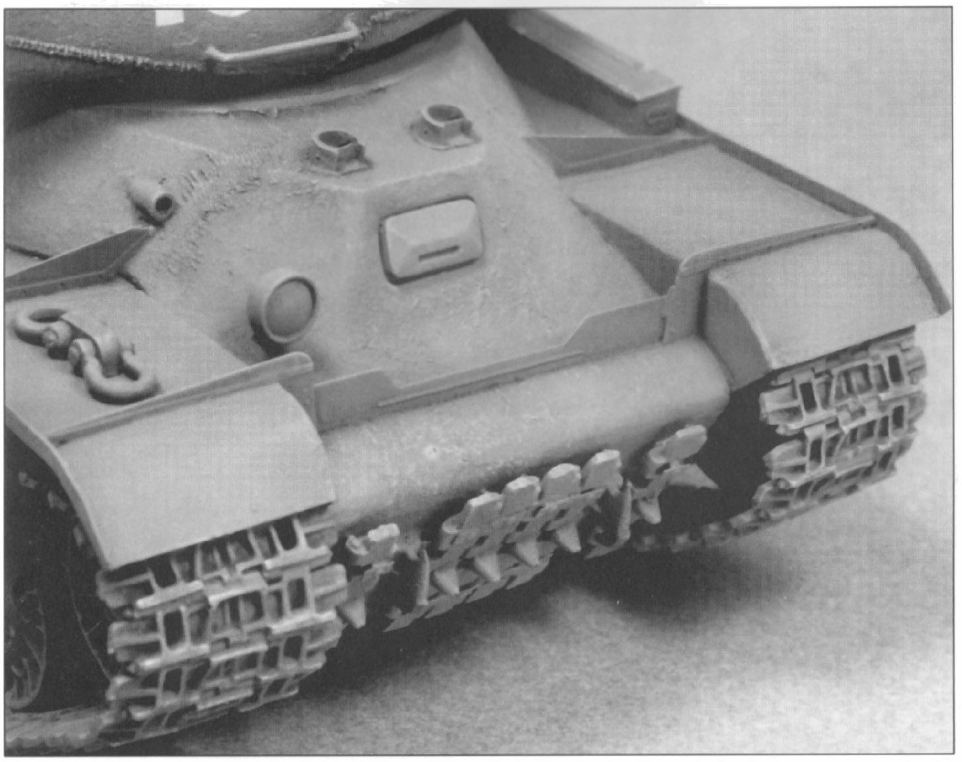
### Tricky Tracks

The tracks on this kit were definitely a challenge. They are link-to-link and are molded in white metal. I have never built metal link-to-link before and I was most intimidated by the fact that you don't have the same long set-up time that you do with plastic tracks.

I used a slightly thicker superglue to tack the links, then I ran higher viscosity s.g. into the joints, and applied Zap-A-Gap when I







*Far left: the brass hatch sandwich of the MB Models kit. This is the loader's hatch. Above: the cool all metal gun barrel. Below left: the front end, note the brass brackets for the fenders as well as the brass fenders themselves.*

was satisfied with the fit. This method did allow for some set-up time. The links are a press fit and all of mine fit together well.

The instructions suggest constructing the long sections first, then working over the idler and sprocket, finishing with the top runs. I stuck pretty much with this method. I built the long bottom sections using a steel ruler to keep them straight. It's important to keep the tracks straight over the idler and drive sprockets as well.

I added the drive sprocket links first to keep the whole assembly in proper alignment. The trickiest part is going around the idler and the top run. You have to both keep the tracks straight, and correctly gauge the number of links to create the track's sag. Using the gluing method described, I added or subtracted links to achieve the droop.

I kept tiny bits of paper towel handy to draw off excess glue from the track joints prior to applying the accelerator. This prevents a gloppy (gloppy—the little known eighth dwarf) build-up of hardened glue on the finely detailed parts.

When the tracks were complete, I hit them again with the Zap-A-Gap overall to ensure that all the glue was hardened. I wiped off any excess after about 30 seconds. It was at this stage also that I did any clean-up of the tracks, filing away any burs or imperfections at the edges. This was a lot easier than attending to each link by itself.

I primed the tracks and wheels using Model Master primer. I also primed the undersides of the fenders at this time. I then sprayed dark green over the roadwheels and under the fenders. When that had dried, I hand-painted the tracks various shades of dark brown and burnt orange. I figured this all would be tough to reach after assembly.

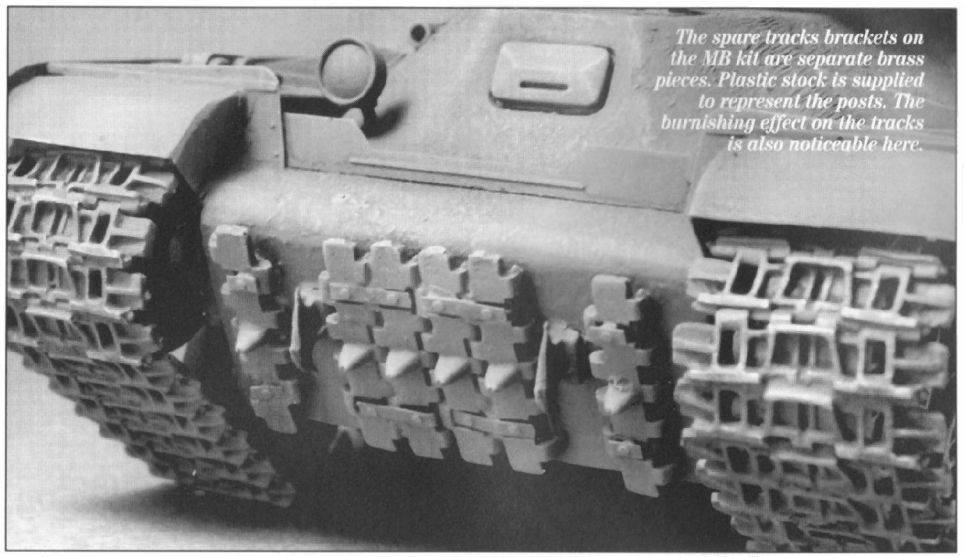
When everything was sufficiently dry, I installed the fenders. I glued the front fender brackets onto the tops of the fenders first to act as a gauge when installing the fenders. This kept the front area at the proper level. I placed the fenders against the hull, then ran superglue along the joints. I was especially careful to ensure the proper fit before applying the glue, as you really only get one chance. When the glue had set, I bent down the back fender panels and tacked the sides to the hull.

### Upper Hull

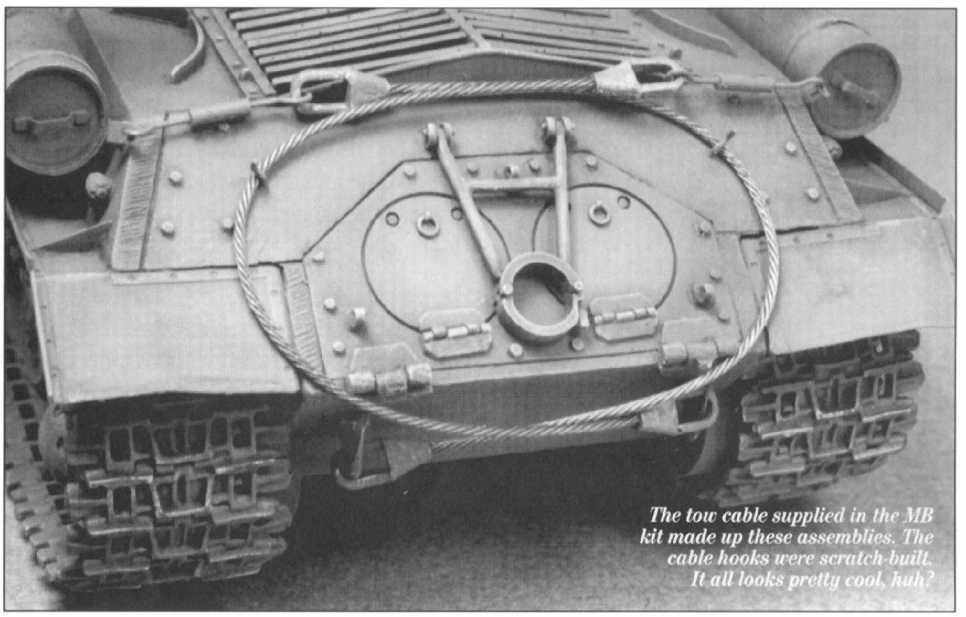
Completion of the upper hull is just a matter of adding certain detail parts. The toughest part of this phase was the four fuel drum assemblies. The drums are very intricately designed, each is composed of eleven parts! All the parts with the exception of the drums themselves are represented by photo-etched brass.

Each mounting bracket receives two very small clasps which engage a strap. The straps taper to a thin line and end with a wing nut shape. This means you can actually hook the drums onto the brackets like the real thing. The catch is that all of the parts are extremely small. I removed all the clasps first, and placed them into a paint bottle cap to keep track of them (don't sneeze!). Each one must be bent into an L-shape before adding to the bracket. The clasp on the outside has a locating hole, but the one on the back just floats. I attached the front one, attached the drum, engaged the strap, then added the second clasp to the back of the strap. I then brought the strap around to the back and glued the clasp to the backside of the bracket. Each assembly was finished off with a photo-etched handle on either end of the drum. This all took a while, but the results were pretty satisfying.

You'll have to be careful when lining up the two brackets on each drum, I just sort eyeballed them. You can't really install the



*The spare tracks brackets on the MB kit are separate brass pieces. Plastic stock is supplied to represent the posts. The burnishing effect on the tracks is also noticeable here.*



*The tow cable supplied in the MB kit made up these assemblies. The cable hooks were scratch-built. It all looks pretty cool, huh?*

system with the brackets on the hull first, as it would be just about impossible to add the straps and clasps. I didn't pay much attention to the position of the drums in the brackets, I just made sure that the drum caps were generally pointing up.

On the engine deck, the engine cooling vents are sunk into the hull for a very realistic effect. The louvered vents are molded into the bottom of the depression. These are covered up with a set of brass screens. At first, I thought the mesh was too thick to see the detail underneath. For some reason you can't see through them until after they're painted. The final effect is pretty keen.

Braided wire is provided for the tow cable. I always liked this feature in cottage industry kits, and I wish the plastic manufacturers would pick up on it. The cable doesn't really need painting as it is a sort of rust metal color. White metal tow eyes are supplied for the cable. I drilled out the ends of the tow eyes and attached the cable. I made two, approximately 3-inch cables.

Folding brass brackets mount on the two corners of the back hull. The cables should wrap around the rear towing lugs and then be hooked to each eye. Two double hook devices were used for this, but they are not included in the kit.

I need to digress here and mention that this detail is not in either of the two review kits. I think this greatly enhances the back end of either model, but I just added it to the MB kit to illustrate. I made the hook doo-hickeys for the cables out of brass wire and plastic rod. I also added the cable guides to the hull using brass rod.

The finishing touch for the back end of the MB kit is a very nice gun travel lock. In the front, a white metal driving light mounts next to the driver's position. It comes with a little etched brass bracket. A nicely formed tool box is provided for the fender, and brass handles are provided for it as well. I also liked the saw (which has real teeth) and the cradle it sits in. Handles for the saw need to be added with brass or plastic rod.

### Tiny's Turret

The turret is a typical one-piece solid resin casting. The texture and real-life casting details are well done. Both the gun and its muzzle brake are molded in white metal. These parts were a pleasant surprise. Most companies would have cast these items in resin. As anyone who has built a resin kit knows, these types of parts are almost always hopelessly warped.

Fortunately, this is not the case with this kit. The metal barrel is razor straight and requires little clean-up. Some is necessary on the muzzle to open up its holes. This is an impressive piece of casting, very much capturing the bulky look of the real item. It did have its two attachment bolts. All the gun parts attach together with large metal lugs and the resulting assembly is quite robust.

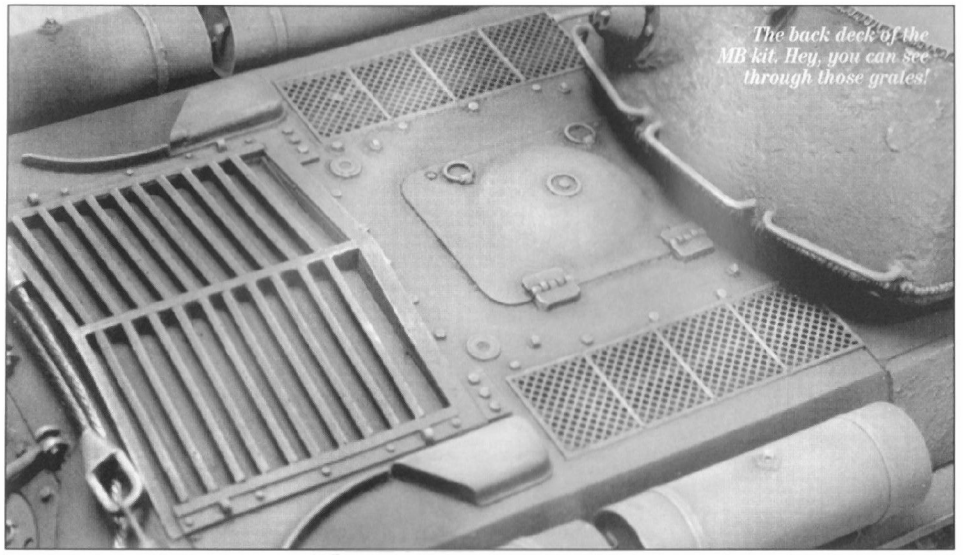
The turret lifting hooks are webbed for stability, but this flash should be carefully removed. Brass wire is provided for the turret grab handles. There's twelve of the little bastards, so a made a jig for forming them. I nailed two finish nails into a small board, about 7/16" apart. For drilling the holes into the turret, I used a number 69 (.0292) bit. This makes for a nice, snug fit. I used the box top photo and the instructions as a reference. The finished handles are very sturdy and tolerate handling well.

Both turret hatches are represented in brass. This was a little different for me, I'd never seen anything like it before. Each hatch is composed of two layers of brass which form the thickness of the hatches. The resulting hatch lips were even thinner than plastic. The finished assemblies may be a bit shy of scale thickness, but an additional piece of sheet plastic could easily be sandwiched into any of the sub-assemblies to remedy this. A choice of periscope heads is provided for the turret roof. The "gumdrop" type and the flat type are both provided.

### Painting

In addition to the painting described above, I followed pretty much the same painting techniques as I did on the DML kit. Prior to painting, I did prime the upper fender surfaces and the remaining metal parts such as the gun, tool box, and travel lock.

It is necessary to exercise a little more care when painting around the tracks, as



*The back deck of the MB kit. Hey, you can see through those grates!*

*Front and back views of the MB turret. The weld beads are nicely done as is the surface texture.*

obviously, they don't come off. I used paper towel to mask off the tracks while I sprayed the rest of the tank in dark green. I went a little heavier on the black washes on the tracks. This was so that after the paint had dried, I could gently buff the tracks with my fine brass wire brush. This very realistically wears the paint off the raised surfaces of the tracks—just like a real tank. This is the reward for the job of constructing all those metal links...

The MB kit does not come with decals, but I did have some of the dry transfers that were manufactured by them a few years back. I rubbed the turrets numbers on prior to my final dusty over spray.

### The Accuracy Thing... Again

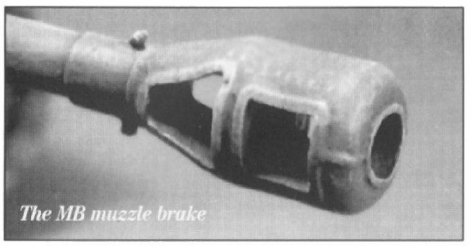
The MB kit is definitely one of the nicest resin kits I have seen. Most of the surfaces where straight and true. Resin kit master patterns are formed by hand, not by machine, like their plastic counterparts. The kit almost looks machined though, the details being very crisp and clean.

I found one glitch on the left hull side, where the hull bows out somewhat. I would have missed it except this is where the tool box installs and it didn't fit on this side. It does fit on the right side. This is easy to fix, as the resin cuts quite easily. It looks like about 1/32 of an inch needs to be removed.

As to the MB kit's comparison to the real vehicle, I felt that its overall impact was just about correct. The wheels and suspension had the big "chunky" feel of the real tank. The gun was another area like seemed to represent the real tank well.

At some angles, the turret appears just a touch too small. The commander's cupola is perfectly round and I believe it should be slightly hex-shaped. Again this would be very easy to fix by shaving down the areas between the vision slits. The instructions rather boldly state that no JS ever had a scalloped cupola. I believe this is in reference to the cupola shown in the drawings of the JS in the Osprey book on Soviet heavy tanks. The drawings show a very deeply cut scallop on the cupola, and this is apparently not correct. The MB instructions contain a photo of the Duxford JSII (on which this kit is based) which appears to show a round cupola. This is what is represented in the kit. However, I have seen other pictures of the Duxford vehicle and I believe that the cupola is very slightly blunted at regular points around its circumference.

Much ado about nothing? Well you know how it goes... the truly geeky must



*The MB muzzle brake*

know. Let's take a look at both kits.

### One Joe Versus The Other

These are two very different kits. Each kit's approach is radically different from the other. They both represent opposite ends of the modeling spectrum. One is in plastic, while the other contains all the elements of a true multi-media kit. The price issue also represents opposites end of the spectrum. The DML kit sells for about thirty dollars, while the MB kit sells for about one hundred thirty five dollars.

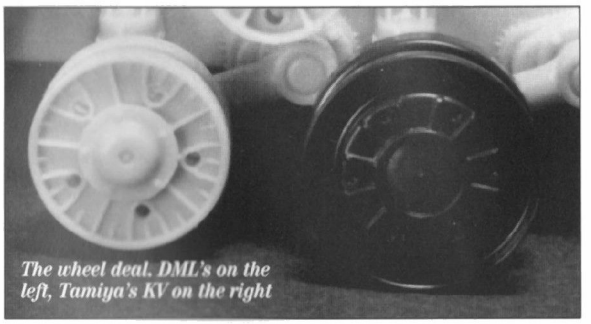
As to each kit's accuracy, I must admit that while intensely studying photos of the vehicle, I found photos that made each vehicle look accurate, while I found others that seem to highlight inaccuracies.

We do know that the MB kit is based on the Duxford vehicle, the master pattern being modeled on its measurements, and it may well represent attributes particular to that tank. When you compare each finished model, the MB kit is considerably longer than the DML kit and somewhat higher. The MB turret is shallower and somewhat narrower. The height of the MB hull appears to be more accurate, the DML hull being somewhat shallow as described above. Where the wheels on the DML kit appeared on the small side, the MB wheels seemed about right.

I'm not going to come down on either side of the accuracy argument. After all, these types of deep discussions have dragged on for years! Hopefully, we have provided enough information for anyone to start solve this one on their own.

Aside from the accuracy and price comparisons, I felt one of the most significant differences in the two kits was the brass fenders in the MB kit. Plastic generally cannot approach scale thickness like brass can. The fenders on the JS were a very prominent feature of the tank, and many of the wartime photos show the JS with its fenders very beat-up or with large sections ripped away. It can be very difficult to represent this in plastic. The brass parts are a lot of fun to work with and as I mentioned, soldering opens up even more possibilities.

In terms of detail comparisons, one other significant feature is that the DML wheels are detailed on all sides, where the MB wheels are flat on the back sides. The DML kit also had more detail around the lower hull and torsion arms. Some of the small plastic parts were finer, such as the lifting eyes on the engine deck.



*The wheel deal. DML's on the left, Tamiya's KV on the right*

### Insane Option

This occurred to me about half way through this review. If you decide that both kits have worthy attributes, it might be very interesting to combine them both.

The larger turret on the DML kit combined with the longer MB hull might just be right on the money. Just a little trimming around the race would be necessary to get it to fit. The plastic link-to-link is a little easier to work with than the metal. I checked and the plastic track fits perfectly around the MB sprocket. Hmmm... Some of the smaller plastic details might also look cool on the MB hull, like those lifting eyes and tools. It doesn't seem like much of a jump to spend the extra thirty clams when you've already spent one hundred and thirty five.

### Conclusion

Should any of this malarkey persuade you from not buying either kit? No way. Here's my ultimate advice: look at both kits, think carefully, consider your budget, then buy one or both. Worse case scenario: you have a great time building a model!

*—Pat Stansell & Ken Dugan*

## MMiR RECCE

**DML JS II Stalin.** Kit number 6012. Purchased from Orange Blossom Hobbies, Miami, Florida. Price was $29.98 plus local tax.

**MB Models Russian JS II.** Kit number 1096. Purchased from the manufacturer; MB Models, Inc. 7325A Cross County Road, Charleston, SC 29418. The price was $135.00, no tax. Payment by credit card (via fax: 803-552-0857), delivery time was approximately five days.

#### References

*Soviet Heavy Tanks*, by Steven J. Zaloga. Osprey Publishing. A good basic reference. Discusses all Soviet heavy tanks, but contains great color plates of various JSIIs. Available wherever the Osprey line is sold.

*The Eastern Front, Armor Camouflage and Markings 1941 to 1945*, by Stephen J. Zaloga and James Grandsen. Squadron/Signal Publications. Not too many photos of JSIIs, but tons of info on various vehicle markings, including JSIIs. Available from Squadron mail order or your local hobby shop. There's a hard cover version available, but allegedly the colors are off somewhat.

*The Road to Berlin*, by Stephen J. Zaloga and James Grandsen. Military Vehicle Fotofax, Arms and Armor Press. A bargained priced booklet with many good shots of JSIIs in the field. Also contains Zaloga's infamous plans of the JSII. If you have difficulty finding this locally, contact the U.S. distributor; Sterling Publishing Co., Inc. 387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016-8810.

*Soviet Mechanized Firepower 1941 - 1945*, by Stephen J. Zaloga and J. Magnuski, Military Vehicle Fotofax, Arms and Armor Press. Companion to the book above. Covers Soviet assault guns from WWII. No JS photos, but good coverage of the ISU assault guns based on the JS.

*The following titles are most likely out of print, but I list them because they contain many rare and unusual photos. Check with your local hobby shop or club, some of them may still be bopping around, or be available for loan.*

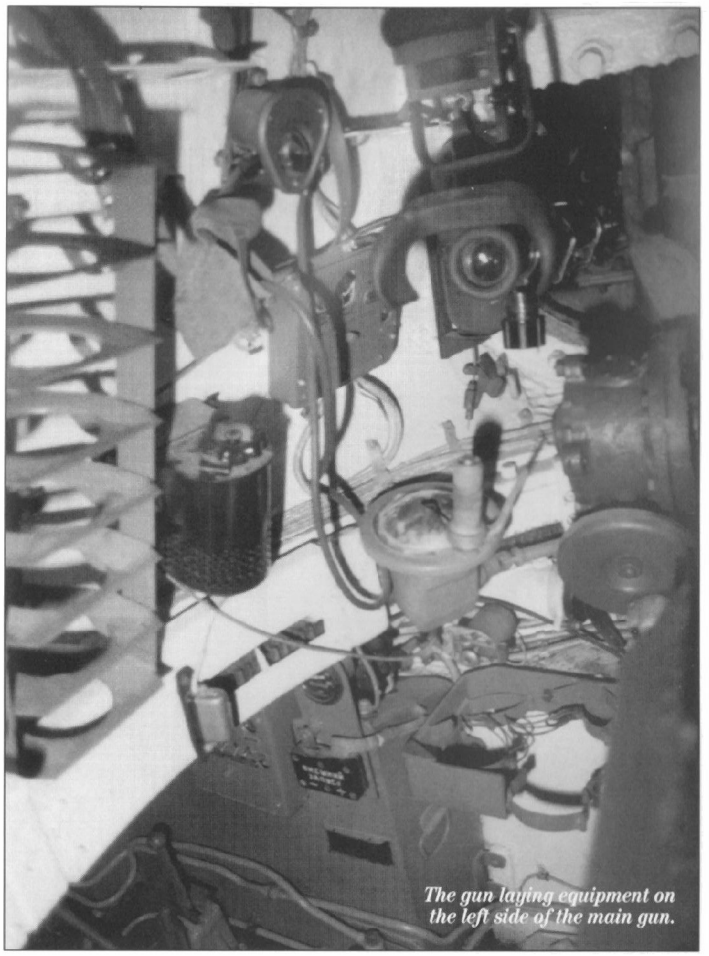
*Tank Magazine No. 9*, 1983. Dozens of excellent photos of the JSII and ISIII. Plans and drawings too.

*Tank Magazine No. 1*, 1985. Photos of the ISU-152 at a Polish museum.

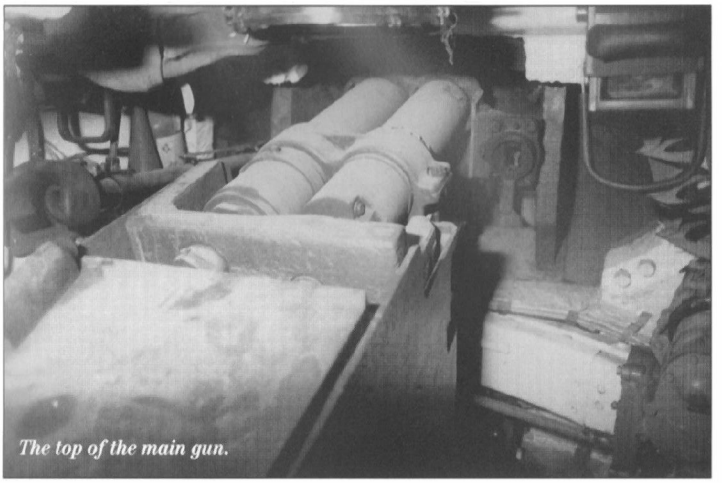
*Tank Magazine No. 3*, 1987. Photos of museum JS's and ISUs.

*Tank Magazine Vol. 16*, No. 1. Photos of museum JS's and ISUs.

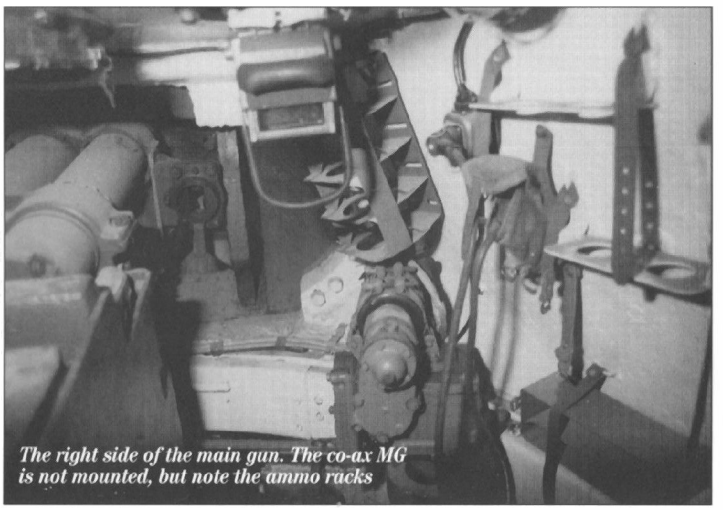
*Model Art Magazine Special, T-34, KV.* Extensive drawings and plans of both the JS and ISU. The plans are especially nice.



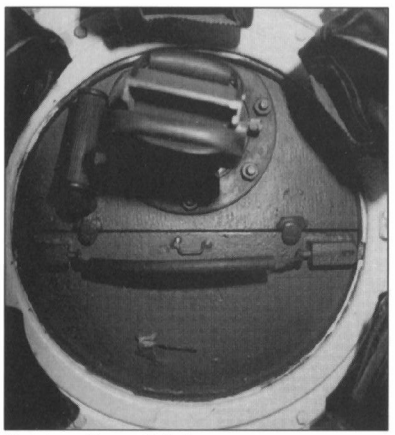
*The gun laying equipment on the left side of the main gun.*



*The top of the main gun.*

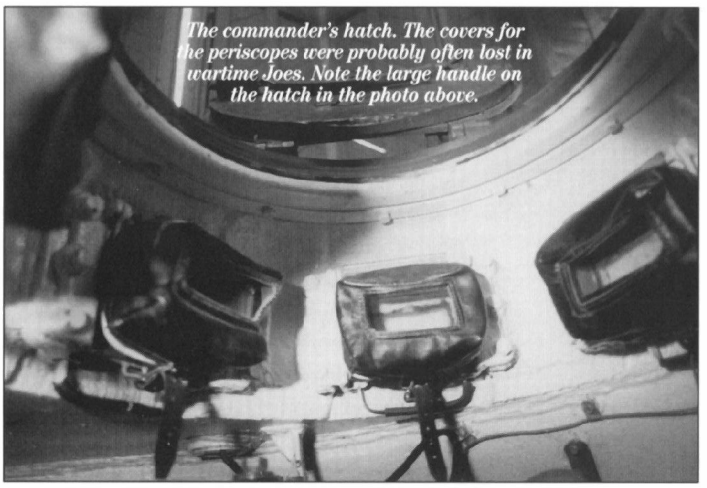


*The right side of the main gun. The co-ax MG is not mounted, but note the ammo racks*

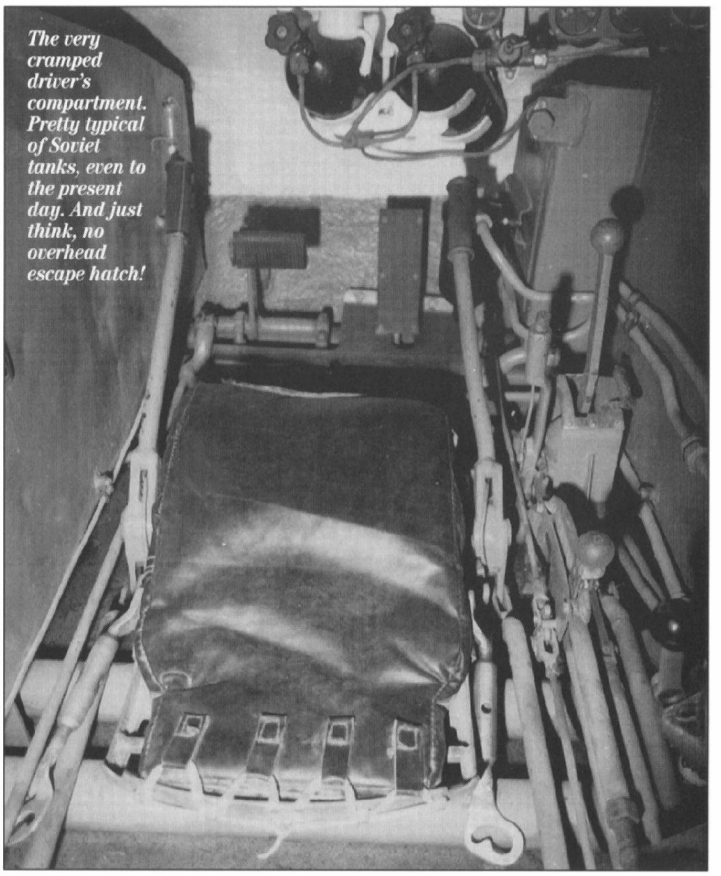


This is the interior of a post-war JSIIm on display in a private collection in England. Although updated, it still retains many of the features of war-time JSIIs. Of particular interest are the MG ammo racks seen through out. The periscopes are also of the war-time type. We'd hate to be the guy that had to sit in that driver's spot...

All photos on this page: E. Smith



*The commander's hatch. The covers for the periscopes were probably often lost in wartime Joes. Note the large handle on the hatch in the photo above.*



*The very cramped driver's compartment. Pretty typical of Soviet tanks, even to the present day. And just think, no overhead escape hatch!*

# Party With Your I

## Italeri takes a stab at the P

*The finished vehicle. The side skirts were left off this side to illustrate. The model is attached to its base with carpet thread.*

The German Panther tank has had a mystic about it for almost fifty years. Allied tankers feared its long range 75mm gun and its thick armor. Modelers who wanted to build this infamous German tank have had only a few options over the years. One was the Tamiya Panther A, but this kit, in addition to being not very accurate, represented only the A model. The Nichimo kit represented only the G model and both kits (especially the Tamiya) needed lots of work to bring them up to par. Gunze Sangyo offered its "high-tech" version of the G for the tidy sum of $110.00. Well, this situation has begun to change. Two all new Panthers are now on the market. The Tamiya Panther G and the subject of this article, the Italeri Panther A.

The Italeri Panther is composed of four sprues molded in tan plastic and a set of tracks molded in steel-colored vinyl. The decal sheet includes markings for two vehicles. Of special interest is one complete sprue composed of Zimmerit surfaces. All of the covered surfaces are represented, including the sides, rear and turret.

### Panther Pieces

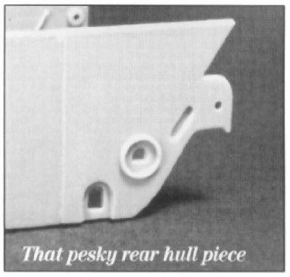
I deviated from the kit's suggested assembly sequence. I built most of the major sub-assemblies first, then added the smaller pieces last.

I began by assembling the lower hull. The very back of the lower hull is molded in two separate parts (3 & 12). This was a little strange as you'd think that these would have just been part of the lower hull. There is also a fairly significant seam to fill after their installation. At any rate, test fit these parts carefully, as they require some trimming to fit correctly. It will be necessary to test fit both the rear hull plate and the upper hull to determine the correct amount of material to remove.

Before adding the upper hull, I added the side sponson plates, the ball mounted MG, the front hull visor (which I left shut), and the block-outs for the square engine grills (36 a & b). Don't forget to paint the block-outs prior to installation, I used flat black. When all was dry, I added the upper hull. All of the remaining hull parts fit well. Incidentally, the hull is very accurate. The bottom has all the appropriate access plates and the lower inside drive housing is detailed.

One interesting part is #31, the hull panel just above the driver and radio

# Panther
## nther Ausf. A


*That pesky rear hull piece*

operator's heads. This is inexplicably molded as a separate piece. Could this mean a future Bergepanther? One has not been announced, but you never know...

A full engine compartment is included in the kit. This is almost worth the price of the kit right here. The engine compartment is molded right into the upper hull, with the engine itself and various tubing as separate pieces. I assembled and painted all of it at this point. I primed the engine and compartment with Floquil Primer and then painted the compartment walls off-white (white with just a drop or two of yellow) and the engine with Floquil Engine Black. When these were dry, I weathered the walls with a wash of thinned artist's gauche (that's pronounced 'gwash') and I dry-brushed the engine with Humbrol Steel.

When all this was complete, I added the engine access panel. I left the engine hatch unglued so that it could be opened to view the engine. The hatch itself has small workable hinges.

### Those Wacky Wheels

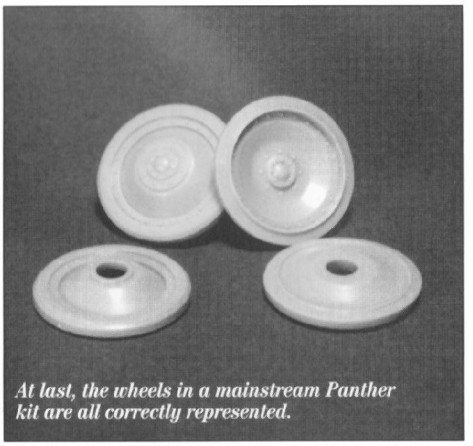
This kit does (finally) include the correct number of roadwheels. The instructions are a little misleading about their assembly though. The wheels should not sit all the way down on to the torsion arms. If you do this, the tracks will sit too close to the hull. I assembled and painted all the wheels and attached them to their torsion arms first. Getting to all those tires later would have been a pain. I used Testors Rubber for the tires and Floquil Panzer Yellow for the wheels.

I added the four outside corner wheel assemblies to the hull first, in order to get the right sit and level of the tank. Be careful when adding the remainder of the wheels to get the interleaving pattern correct and to make sure that all the wheels are lined up and level. Lots of dry fitting will help. There wasn't too much play in the arms, they all sat pretty solidly against the hull.

The rest of the lower hull contained all of the correct fittings, like the torsion arm bumpers and the small track guide wheel behind the drive sprocket.

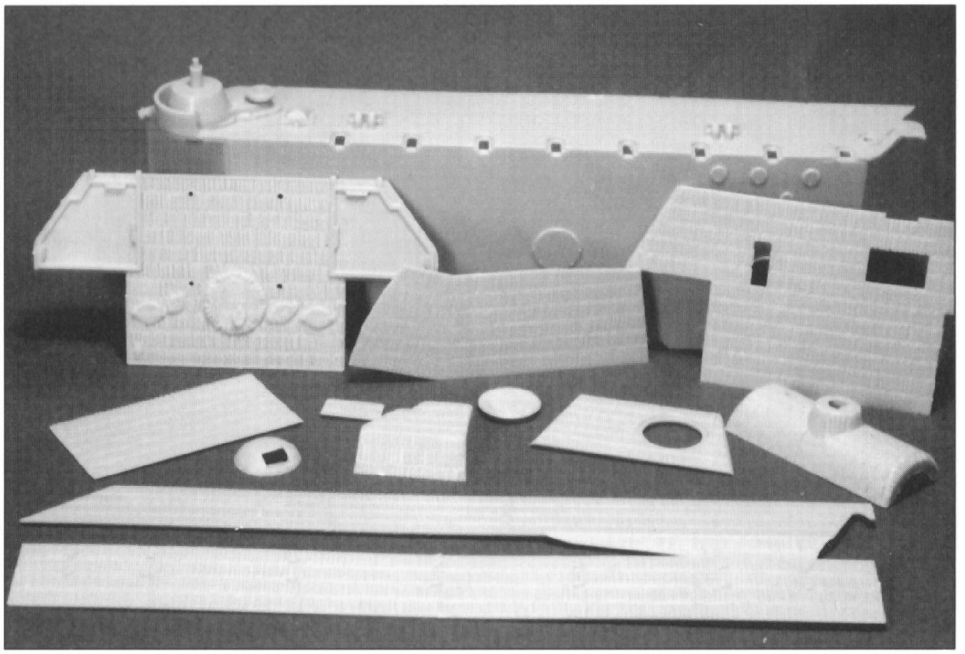
The tracks are composed of two vinyl sections each. This is a little weird. You'd have thought each would just be one continuous strip. I guess one long one wouldn't have fit in the box! Anyway, they all fit together well and they engaged the drive sprocket perfectly. Vinyl spares are included in addition to injection molded ones.

Side-skirts are provided for both sides, but I just added them to one side to illustrate how the kit looked with and without. These are both molded as one-piece and brackets are molded on the backs of each one.

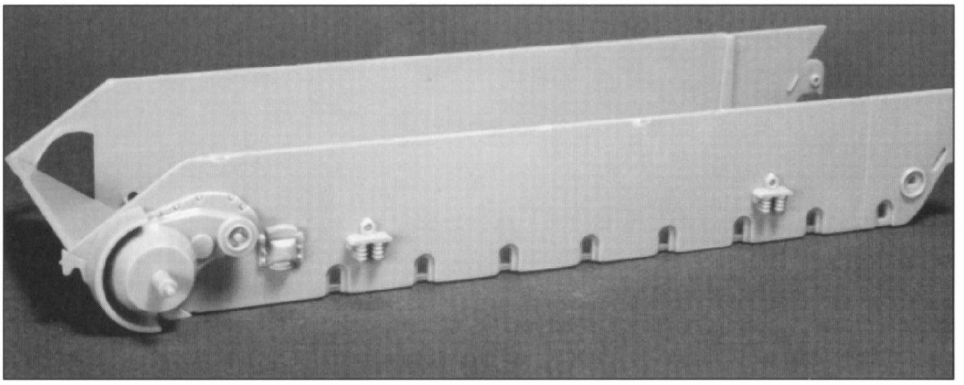

*At last, the wheels in a mainstream Panther kit are all correctly represented.*

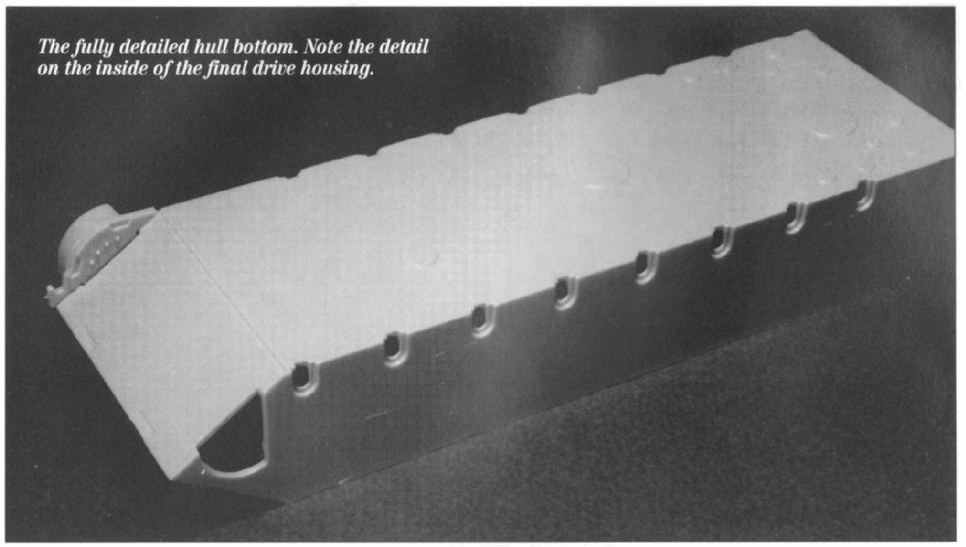
### Der Turret

I assembled the basic turret shape first. There is a groove to receive the turret floor around the lower section of the turret. Make sure that the floor fits against this groove and not on top of it. This creates the slight overhang that was present on the real tank. Otherwise the turret will sit too high on the hull.

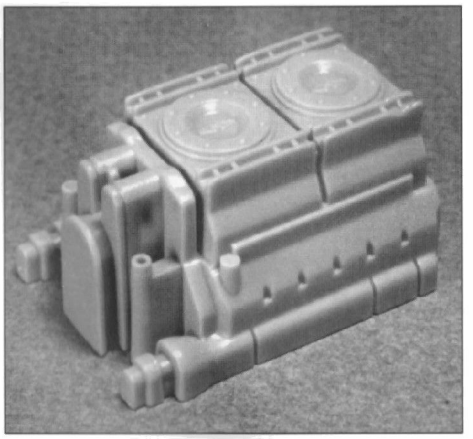


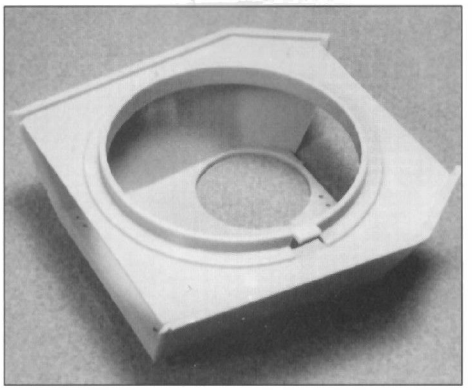
*Above: the panels for covering the hull in Zimmerit. Quite a novel solution to an age-old modeling problem. Below: the detailed hull side. Hey look! It's that elusive track roller on the final drive housing.*





*The fully detailed hull bottom. Note the detail on the inside of the final drive housing.*





*Above: the one-piece engine module. Below: the turret floor. Its location is a bit tricky, it should sit down into the turret slightly.*

The main gun is your typical two piece deal and it went together with no problems. The gun mantlet is also available as a Zimmerit coated part. I built this model "sans-Zimmerit" so I opted for the smooth part. The location of the co-ax MG hole in the mantlet is a little off. It looks like it's lower and to the left of where it should be. There was a little clean-up necessary on the commander's cupola. The vision slits all had a fair amount of flash on my example. I added small squares of plastic to represent the periscopes around the circumference of the cupola.

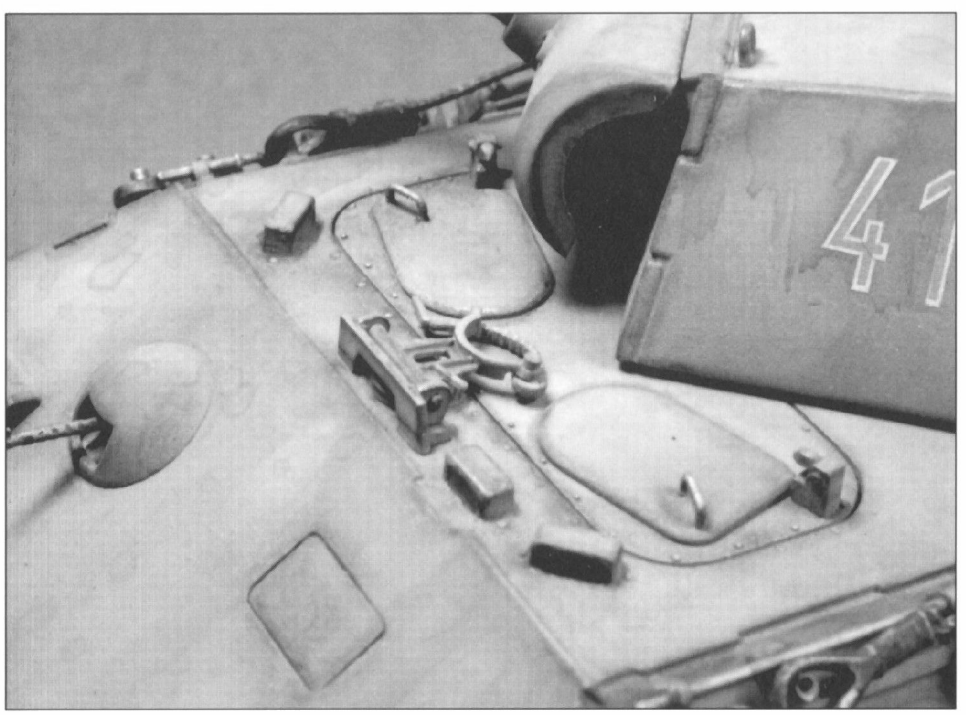
There is a workable hinge mechanism provided for the rear turret hatch. I thought it looked somewhat too large, but I had already opted to show the entire tank buttoned up. The commander's AA machine gun ring was a bit on the thick side also, and the frame base for the MG was molded on. It would have been nice to have the option of moving it around.

At this point, I went back and added all the remaining bits of detail to the hull and the turret, like the lights, grab handles, tool frames and tools. The tools appear to be the same ones found in Italeri's Panzer IV. I was never crazy about those, but I suppose that's being a little nit-picky.

### Paint Your Panther

I painted my Panther an overall scheme of solid dark yellow. As I mentioned above, I used Floquil Armor yellow. Many modelers like these lacquers because of the way they bite into the plastic. This helps them tolerate handling better during the weathering process.

The wheels and suspension had already been assembled and painted as described above, so I just finished spraying the hull and turret. I masked off the square engine grates to shield the block-outs from any over spray. Once the paint was dry, I removed the mask and hand-painted the grates with the dark yellow. Both the idler wheel and the outer rim of the drive sprocket were painted with the Humbrol Steel. Many photos show extreme wear in these areas due to constant contract with the tracks.

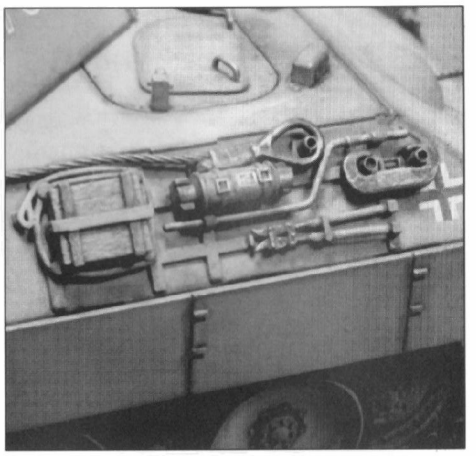


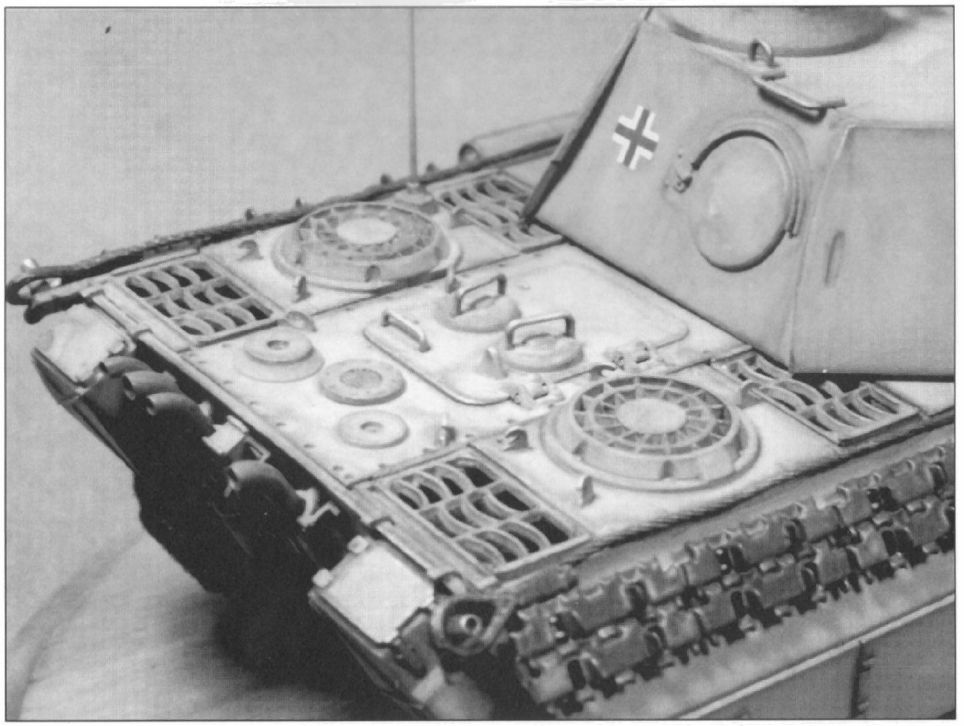
All the tracks, including the spares, were painted Floquil Engine black. Then, they were given a wash of rust colored Pelikan Plaka (found in art stores) water-color paint. When that was dry, they were dry-brushed with steel. The tools and tow cables were also given a similar application of rust and steel.

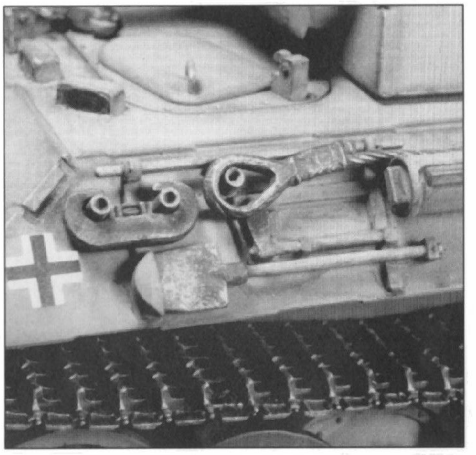
All the visible optics were painted with Testors Chrome Silver, then highlighted with a drop of Micro Crystal Klear.

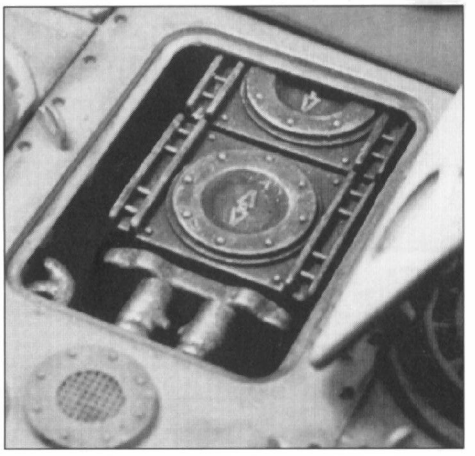
I used the kit's decals and they were O.K., but not entirely accurate. It's necessary to cut the individual numbers apart because sequence provided is not correct. By 1944, Panzer regiments were divided into 2 battalions. The first having Panthers and the second having Panzer IVs. Only 1st battalions had Panthers.

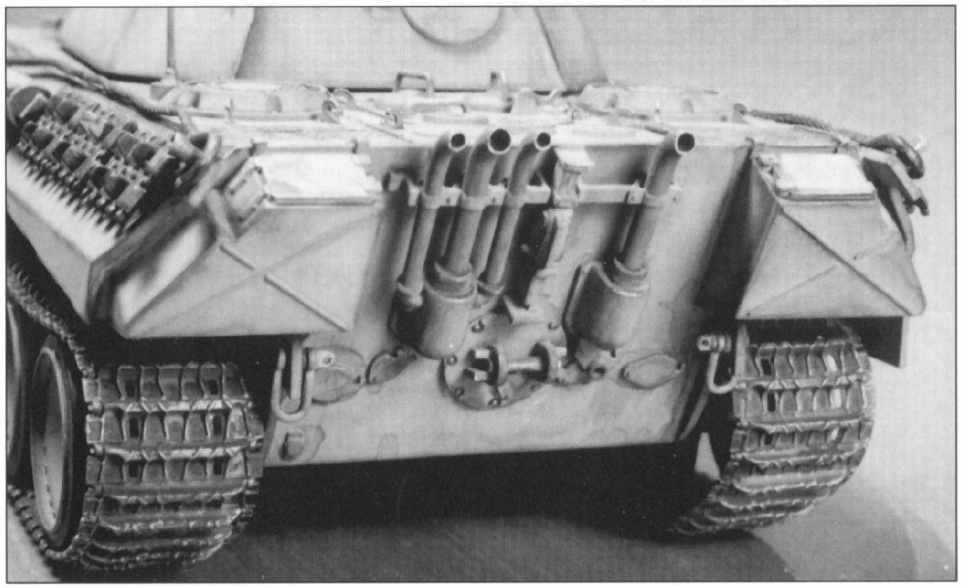
The company numbers of the 1st











*Upper left: the side skirts installed. In this case, only on the right hand side.*
*Above right and above: the tool stowage on either side of the tank. The tools are the same as those provided in the Italeri Panzer IV kits.*
*Above: the Maybach engine after installation and painting. The entire engine panel is a separate piece that may be left out for viewing the whole compartment. Just think, the price of some after market engines for the Panther are more than this kit all by itself!*
*Above left: the rear engine deck. Those square vents are blocked out from below with parts provided in the kit.*
*Left: the back end of our cat, showing the distinctive "triple pipe" exhaust. If you opt for the Zimmerit coated vehicle, even the stowage boxes and their lids are provided with the coating.*

battalion were one through four. Company numbers for the 2nd battalion were five through eight. Each company had three platoons and each platoon had five vehicles. Of the turret numbers, the first number denoted the company, the second denoted the platoon and the third denoted the vehicle. So there couldn't have been a 145 because there was no fourth platoon. So the first turret number provided in the kit wouldn't work. I re-ordered the number to read 415. Of course, you could just use 233 which is a valid number. I applied the decals with a little diluted white glue. This seems to work as well as any setting solution I've used.

I weathered the tank overall with a wash of thinned black gauche and a small amount of the thinned rust colored Pelican Plaka. I applied yellow and brown pastels across the large broad areas of the hull and turret. This helped to blend the washes and unify the paint scheme. I also applied ground graphite (basically just pencil lead, but available in sticks from art stores) to highlight all the sharp edges that would have seen heavy wear.

To complete the model I attached it to a finished wooden base using carpet thread. I looped the thread around the track at about the third roadwheel and then down through the base. This serves to create the sag in the tracks as well as secure it to the base. If you do it carefully, no one will ever notice. I like this method also because it allows the model to be picked up and handled without the model itself being touched.

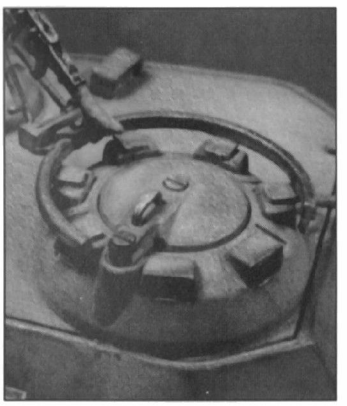
### Conclusion

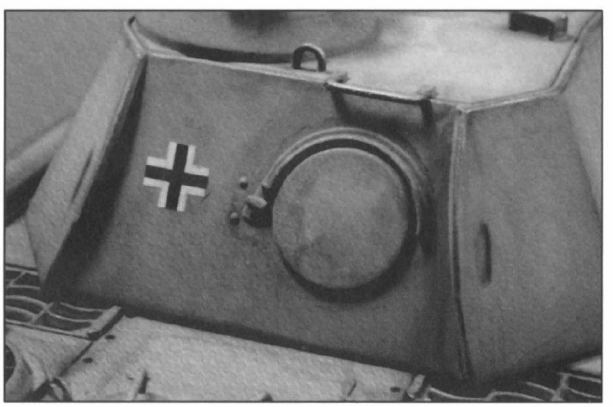
The model scales out more or less correctly according to plans in both the Spielberger book on the Panther and the book; Panzers at Samur. I should say that I did not choose to add the Zimmerit panels to my model. I did this so that the hull details would be visible and to illustrate that the panels are an option. However, you should know that almost all A's sported the coating. I was unable to find a single photo of the tank in the field without it. It appears that perhaps the model was made to scale out with the Zimmerit installed. The hull dimensions scale out about 1 inch over with the Zimmerit and about 2 inches under without it. This may or may not be intentional, but the panels are thick enough to significantly alter the vehicle's dimension in scale. You'll also find that the areas where the Zimmerit panels end are very obvious (due to the thickness of the panels), and would need attending to if you go that route.

It's difficult to knock a kit that costs less than half the price of its closest competition. Although the kit lacks the fine detail of some other recent armor releases, for the price you really can't go wrong. The kit would serve as an excellent platform for super detailing. The hull and tools could be detailed in brass, and using the abundant references on this vehicle, lots of bits could be added using plastic strip and Grandt Line nuts and rivets.

I think it goes without saying that this kit is world's away from the earlier Panther A from Tamiya. There are rumblings from Italeri that the Panther line will be expanded starting later this year with a Jagdpanther, so they may also be doing a G model. The presence of this kit on the market broadens the choices of the modeler and also helps to encompass other levels of skill. It's great to have the choice.

*—Scot Bradley*





*Several views of the turret. The ring for the AA machine gun is a little on the chunky side. Overall, everything looks pretty good.*

## MMiR RECCE

**Italeri Panther Ausf A**. Kit number 270. Purchased from VLS Mail Order, Lone Star Industrial Park, 811 Lone Star Drive, O'Fallon, MO 63366, (314) 281-5700. I back-ordered the Panther about four months prior to its release. Once in, the kit was shipped in about a week. I belong to their "Master's Group" which entitles me to a 25% discount on all purchases. The final price on the kit was $15.00. There was no shipping (another Master's perk) and no local tax.

#### References


*Panther in Action* by Bruce Culver. Squadron Signal Publications. Part of the Armor in Action Series, this book has been around for some time. It's a very good basic reference, with plans and color plates. About eight dollars or so, wherever Squadron books are sold.

*Panther and Its Variants* by Walter J. Spielberger. Schiffer Publishing. The English version of *Panther und seine arbarten*, covers all phases of the tank's development. Plans and interior photos. Around thirty-five dollars. Available from the MMiR Book Services Menu or wherever Schiffer books are sold.

*Panzers in Saumur, No. 2.* Art Box Co., Ltd. Extensive coverage of the Panther A preserved at the Musée des Blindés in Saumur, France. Hundreds of interior and exterior photos, plans and drawings. About twenty-five dollars. Check your local hobby shop or see the Book Services Menu.

# Japanese Type-95 Ha-Go

## A close-up look at the Fine Mold's pricey little light tank

Wow! A new Japanese WWII tank! I was really excited when the word got around that this vehicle was on the way. I was also pleased that it was injection molded, not resin, so the cost would be reasonable. NOT! I don't know if Hasegawa, who's doing the marketing, or Fine Molds, the manufacturer, bears the responsibility for the price, but it's exorbitant. If you spend a lot of money at your local hobby shop or have a friend in the business you may be able to get a deal, but the list on this baby is $130, and the best advertised discount is Battle Hobbies' $115.

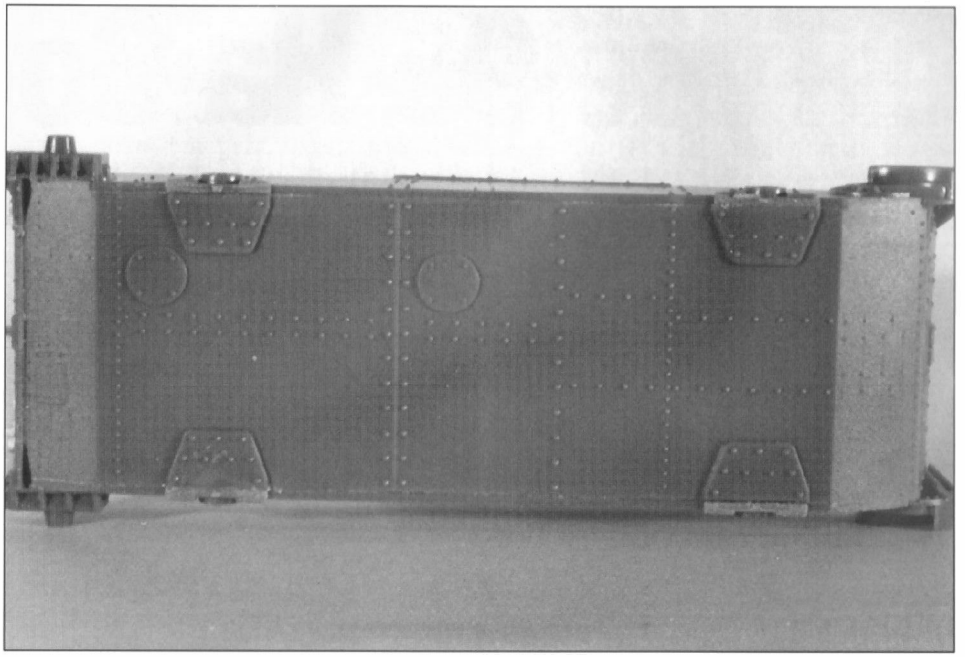
The question is: is it worth it? Is it multimedia with lots of white metal and photo-etched? Does it have separate link tracks? interior detail? It does have separate tracks. It does have photo-etched; one little screen, albeit nicely done. There's five metal parts; exhaust manifold, exhaust pipe, jack, figure, and a little three-cornered handle. There's no interior. The decals include markings for five versions. There is a huge box (big enough for DML's Maus!), so big that they had to put an insert in one end to keep the stuff from slopping around. The box has very nicely done artwork (showing a Che-Ha medium which is available from Tamiya, a Ha-Go, and a Type 97 tankette, perhaps Fine Molds next subject?) including three-views of the subject. The molding looks pretty good, although there is a lot of flash, which theoretically shouldn't be there with brand-new molds. Instructions are all in Japanese with no English translation.

### The Saga Begins: Construction, Lower Hull and Suspension

The suspension parts all fit together well, but there's one quirk; all the wheels and the idler have alignment pins, but not the drive sprockets. Considering that the sprocket is the only part that needs alignment so the teeth line up I thought this was odd. I took a two-shoe (the track sprues have one two- shoe and six one-shoes each) out of the tracks to use for an alignment tool.

There's some nice molding evident here; check out the tiny welds where the rim of the idler is attached to the hub. There's also some not so nice molding apparent; the return roller mounts were misaligned, not much, but enough that I had to deal with it. Maybe these guys should be called "Pretty Good Molds" instead of "Fine Molds".

The lower hull is one of those six part deals consisting of the floor, hull sides, front and rear plate and a center bulkhead. I don't like this method, as a minor skew that would be difficult to see by eye, leads to all kinds of fit problems. However this one went together



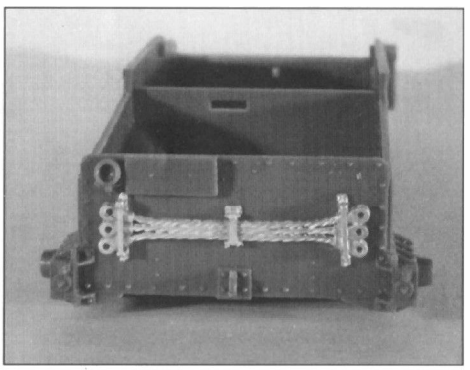
*Above: one of those multi-piece hulls, but this one has interlocks at the front and rear to avoid alignment problems. The hull bottom is completely detailed, as well it should be for this price!*

strongly attached. I hate a flimsy suspension!

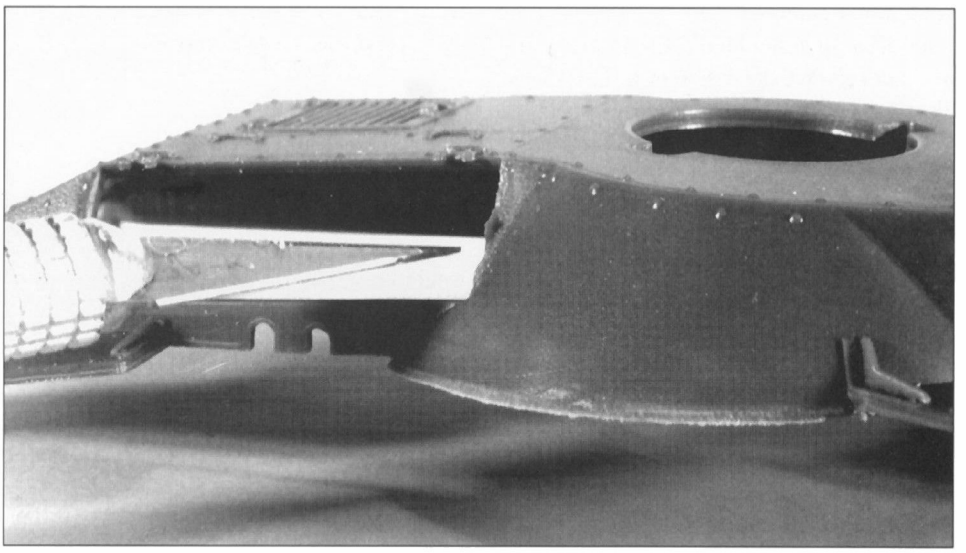
The tracks are nice. I'm not one of those people that just has to have separate links. But if the vehicle has a noticeable droop in the tracks, then the only way to get it is with separate links. The Ha-Go has a distinct droop on the top run in every photo I have seen of it. If you use a sharp knife to cut them off the tree there's very little, if any clean-up. They aren't a press fit though, so glue is a must. I used a tiny bit of tube glue in the middle to hold the links in place and then Tenax to fix them. I ended up with 91 links per side; less droop would probably save a couple shoes. Speaking of saving shoes, I had ten left over. I got scared toward the end, thinking that there weren't going to be enough.

### The Upper Hull

There's some major disappointment here. If this kit cost twenty five or thirty



*Tow cables installed on the rear hull plate. The metal parts weren't easy to find, being hidden inside the insert in the box.*



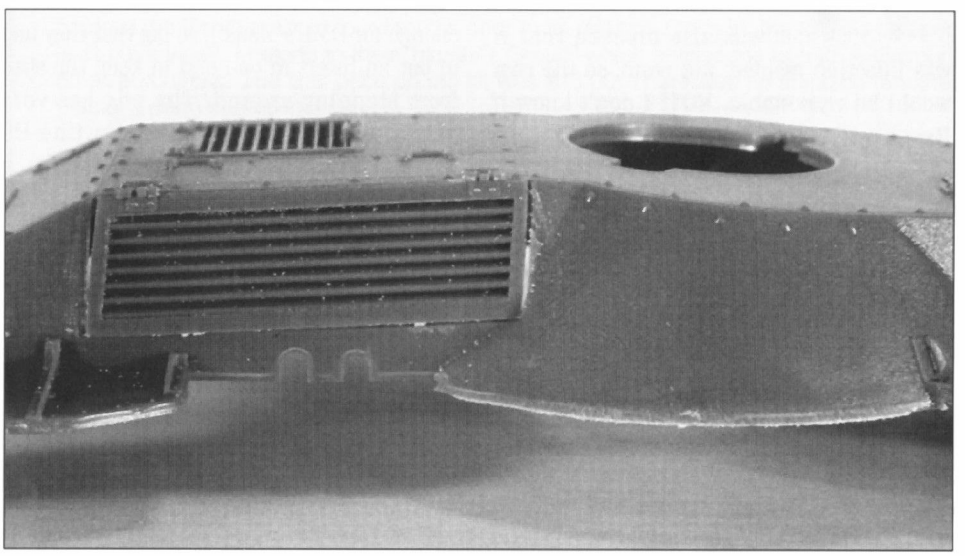
*Knife points to the poor molding evident at the front of the engine hatch. Incredibly bad for a $130 kit... and the resulting gap to fill around the hatch.*

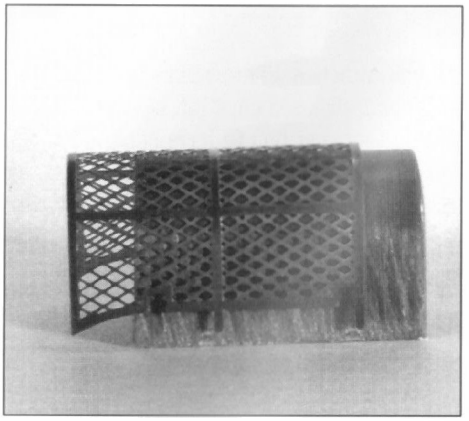
well, the design providing safeguards against errors.

There's a mistake in the instructions at this point: part A9 is shown glued to the floor at the rear of part A10, the center bulkhead. This should be glued in the slot at the top of A10 to the front. This is a platform for the figure to stand on, and dry fitting the hull top shows where it should be. By the way, it's a shaky platform, and a 16mm leg added at the front would help to hold the weight of the heavy metal figure provided.

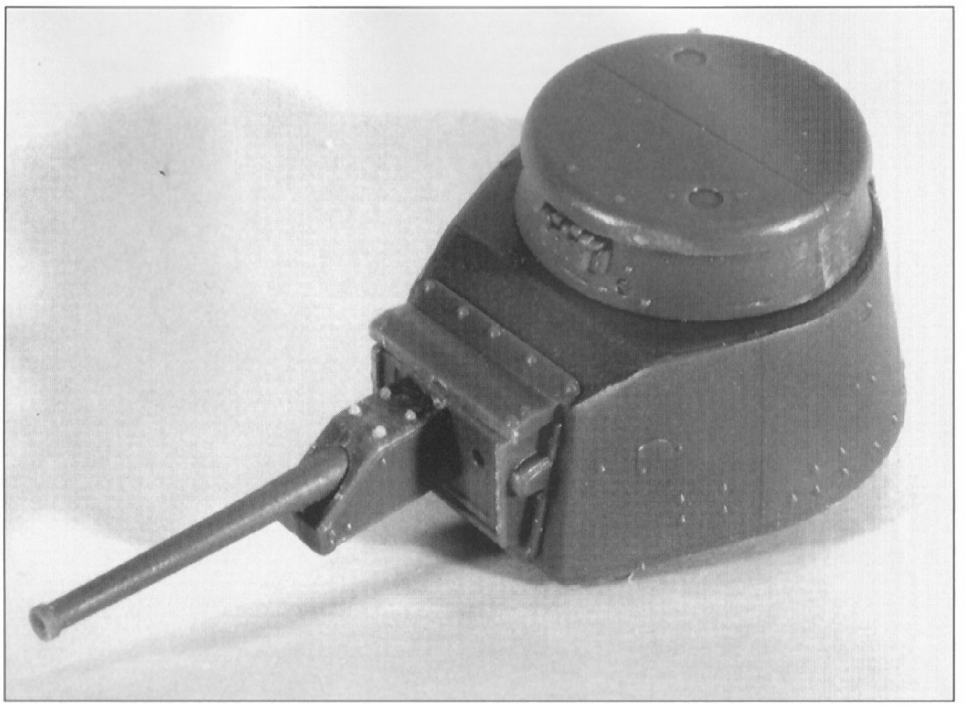
In assembling the rear plate, I had a bit of trouble finding the tow cables, one of the white metal parts. They're packed inside the insert in the box.

In installing the suspension parts, make sure that the bogie arms (parts C1&2 with B15) go on before B18. Maybe the instructions tell that, but I don't read Japanese. All these parts went together very well, and are quite





*Something really nice; a mandrel to bend the photo-etched muffler guard around.*



*Above: turret, showing the puttied seam on the cupola and the Grandt line bolts on the top of the gun mount. Below: overhead view, no paint. The metal parts on the exhaust system are evident.*

bucks I'd probably not even mention it, but for $130 the hatches and machine gun position ought to fit, and they're not even close. And I'm talking none of 'em fit!

I closed the gaps with strip styrene and putty, but really! Building the driver's hatch open would eliminate some of this, but then you'd have to scratchbuild the interior, and who knows what the inside of a Ha-Go looks like? Not only that, but the opening for the engine hatch was not very clean either.

The front fenders have a 2mm gap over the drive sprocket mounts (maybe the gap is supposed to be there; the instructions say something about 2mm and the sprocket mounts, but like I said, I don't read Japanese.)

I replaced the handle on the driver's hatch with wire, not because it looks better, but because I didn't want to hassle with cleaning the flash off the delicate plastic one supplied.

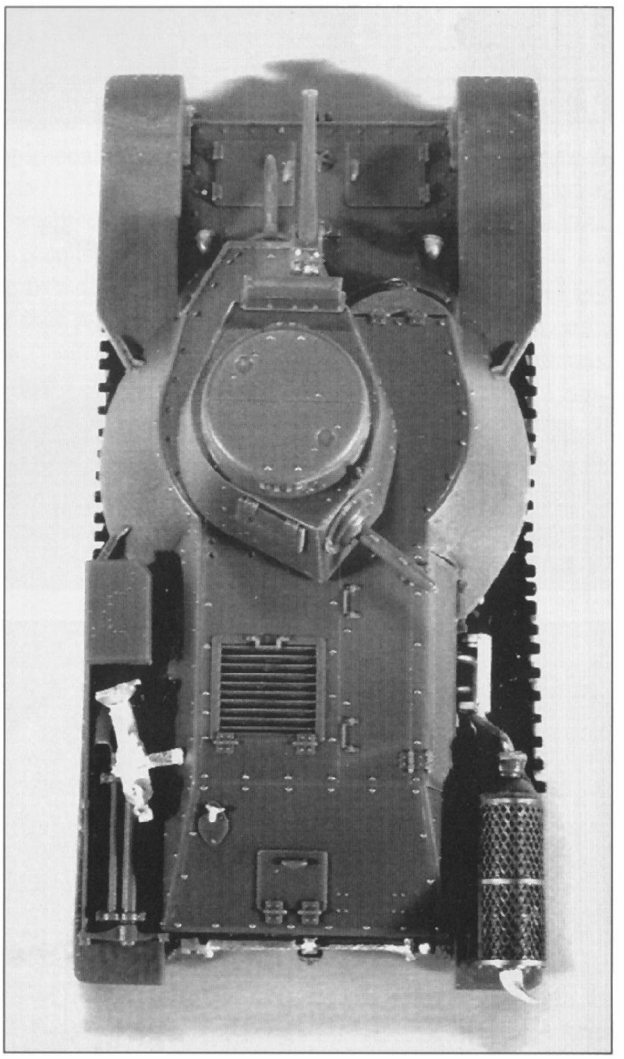
A nice touch was the provision of a plastic mandrel for bending the photo-etched muffler guard. This way you get the right curve on the part, and don't have to spend two hours looking for something to bend the little bugger around. By the way, this part is very nicely done. For that matter, all the metal parts are well done. I wondered about that little handle cast in white metal, though; seems this would've been just as easily done in plastic.

### The Teeny-Weeny Turret

The turret parts all fit pretty well. The cupola halves needed a bit of putty at the seams. Parts are provided to fit either an open or closed hatch; with no interior detail, I built it closed. The only misfit was the machine gun mount; its mounting pin was in the wrong place, but it only took a second to remove.

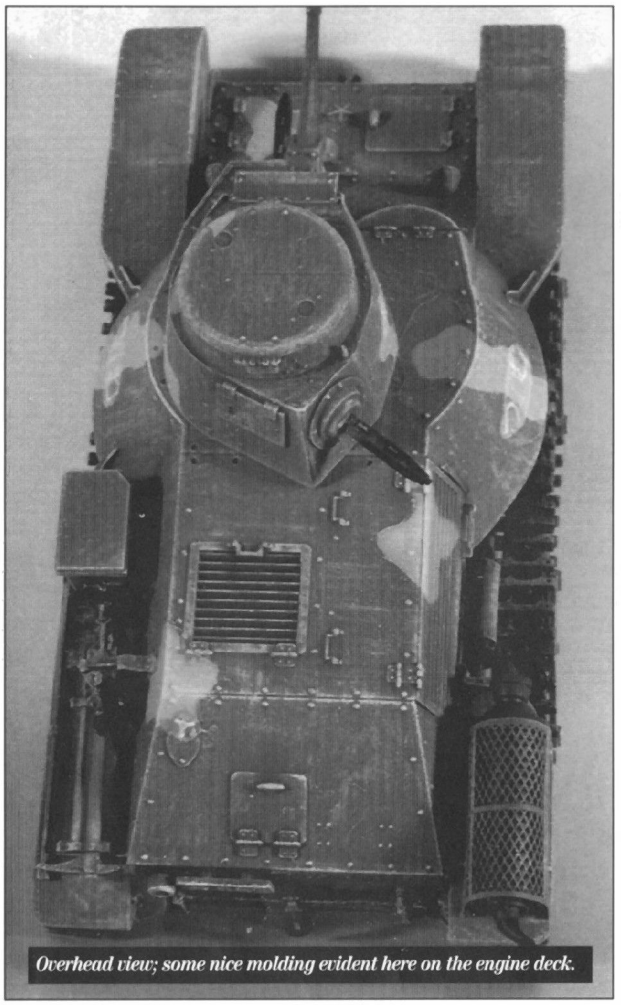
The turret ring was a tight fit on the hull, but a quick pass with sandpaper fixed it.

There are a couple of gripes, though. Again, these would be ignored if this was a $25 kit. The top of the gun mantlet had to be detailed with Grandt line bolts (not provided). The instructions say something but I don't...well, you know. The end of the gun muzzle had to be drilled out, too. Somebody called "Fine Molds" ought to give you a hollow muzzle, or for this price, a metal barrel.

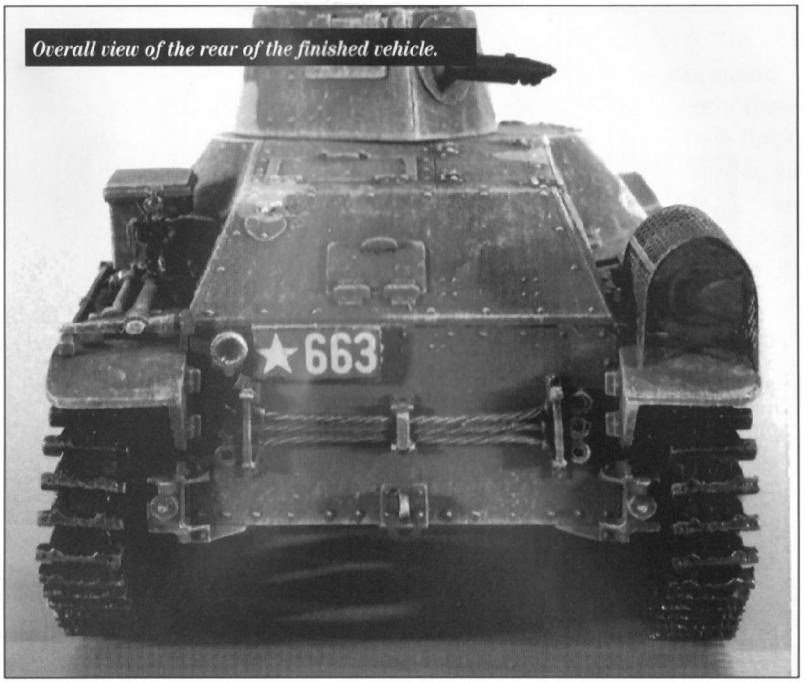


### Peleliu Painting

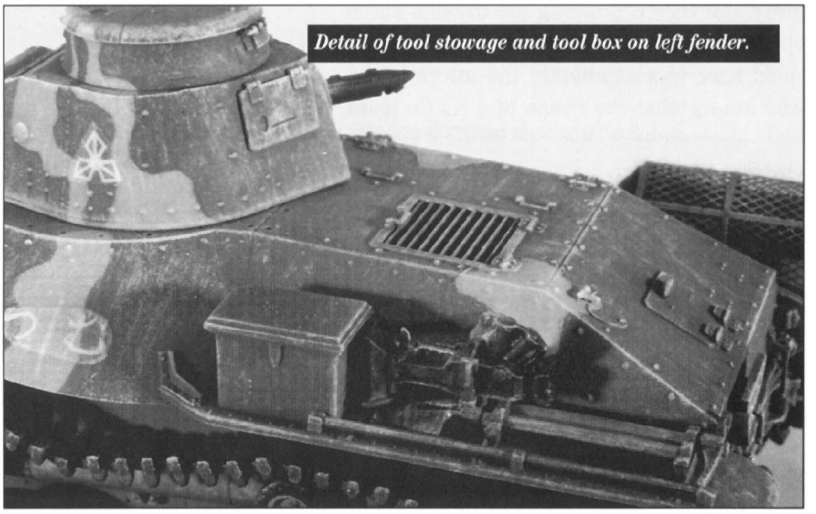
The one set of markings provided is for a 14th Infantry Division vehicle from Peleliu in the Palaus. My dad fought in this campaign as a recon platoon commander, and he saw the death ride of the Ha-Gos across the airfield on the first day. He told me that he, being off to one side and barely in range, never fired a shot, but that for about thirty seconds the air over the airstrip turned to solid metal, as everything and everybody with a gun cut



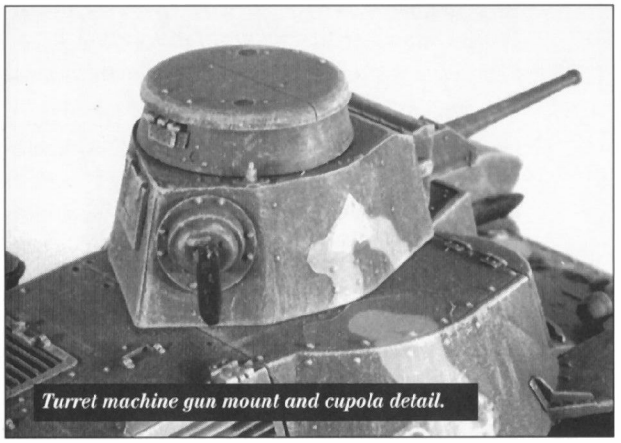
*Overhead view; some nice molding evident here on the engine deck.*



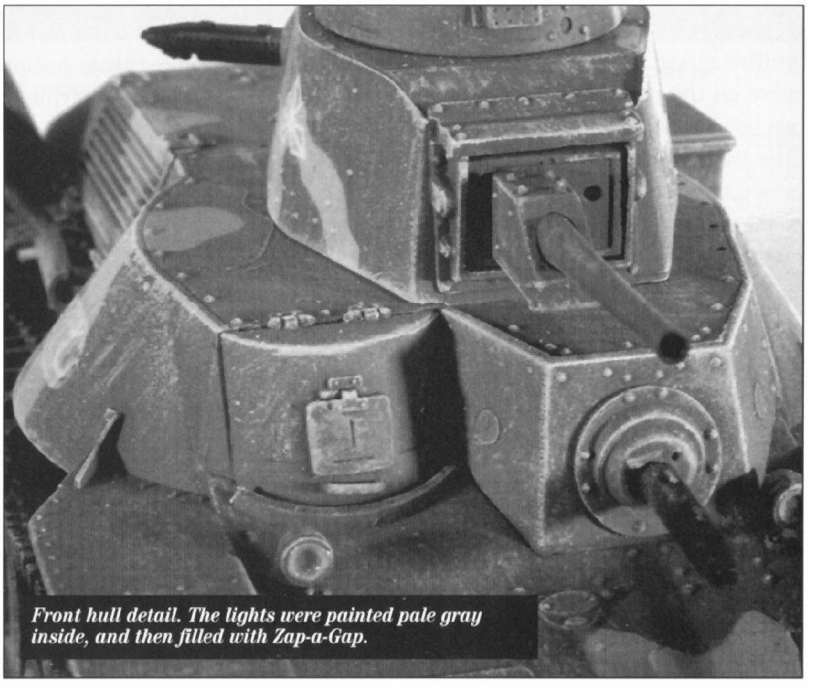

*Overall view of the rear of the finished vehicle.*



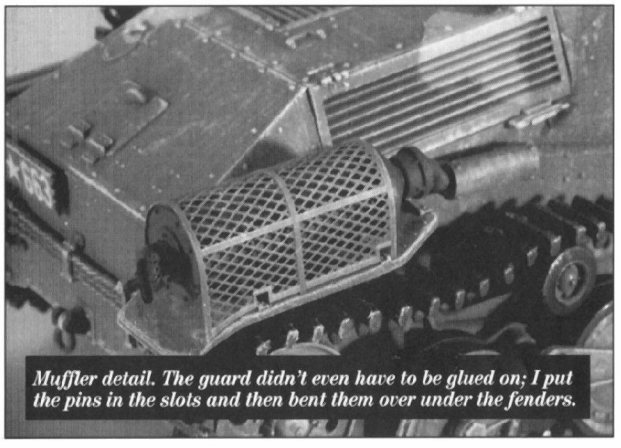
*Detail of tool stowage and tool box on left fender.*



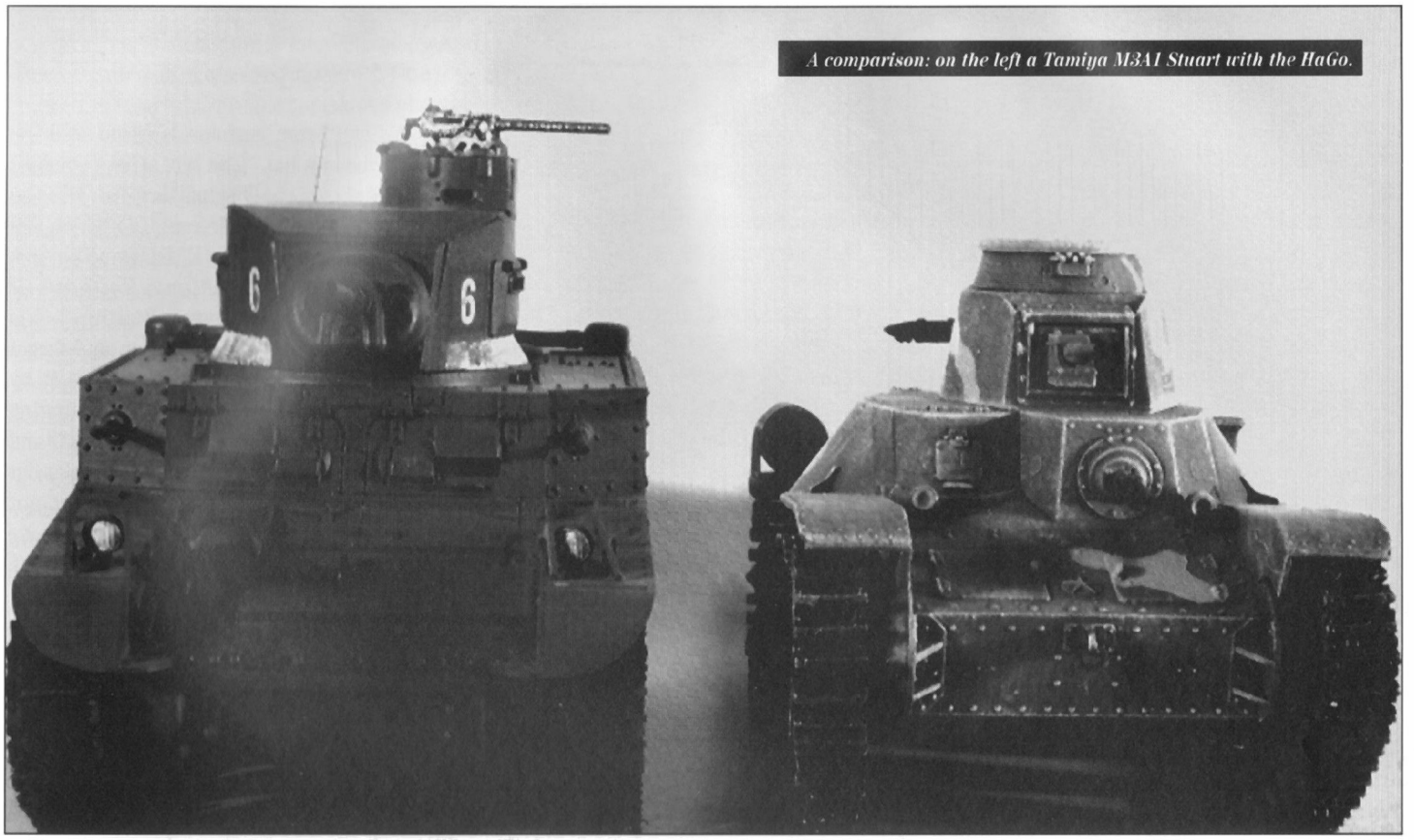
*Turret machine gun mount and cupola detail.*



*Front hull detail. The lights were painted pale gray inside, and then filled with Zap-a-Gap.*



*Muffler detail. The guard didn't even have to be glued on; I put the pins in the slots and then bent them over under the fenders.*



*A comparison: on the left a Tamiya M3A1 Stuart with the HaGo.*

loose. One Marine Sherman commander started with armor-piercing, which whistled right through the little devils without going off. He then changed to high explosive, but the Japanese armor was too thin to set them off, so he finally changed to instantaneous. "That stopped 'em," he said. Stopped indeed; the Type 95s were so shot to pieces that division intelligence, trying to count afterwards, couldn't even tell how many had made the charge! (Full descriptions of this can be found in the 1stMarDiv history, *The Old Breed*, by George McMillan, and *Peleliu, Tragic Triumph,* by Bill D. Ross.)

Some of these vehicles, by the way, had up-ended oil drums tied to their back decks, with an infantryman riding in it. "Into the valley of death..."

So I had to do my Ha-Go in the Peleliu scheme, and luckily Steve Zaloga's *Armour of the Pacific War* has a color plate of one. I had to mix a pale green and a yellow to match from Pactra acrylics, but their A23, Light Earth, was perfect for the reddish brown.

The decals were kind of weird. First they were mounted on a piece of board that was difficult to cut with a pair of scissors that has no trouble cutting brass and sheet styrene. MicroSet worked well, snugging down the markings, but I was surprised to see that Pactra flat didn't make the film 'go away' as usual.

### ...And In Conclusion

According to B.T. White's Tanks and other Fighting Vehicles of WWII and Crow and Icks' Encyclopedia of Tanks, the finished vehicle measures within a couple scale inches in each dimension, plenty close.

So I guess the answer to "Is it worth it?" is up to you. If you want to have a complete collection, then it is. If you want to fight the constantly escalating price of kits, then just say no. I'm bitchin', but I did buy one...

Is there justification for the price? Let's break the cost down like this: Spojnia's 7TP makes a model about the same size and is about the same in number of trees and parts; it sells for $12-$15. Model Kasten tracks for it are $33. A photo-etched detail set goes for about $12-$15. A nice white metal figure is $15 or so. Add 'em up and you get $75, so it doesn't quite even out. I think they may be trying to recoup their tooling costs in the first year. The proof will be if the price declines in a couple of years.

Since these vehicles are part of my family's history, I'd have had to buy one regardless of the cost. The end result was wasn't too bad; I felt I ended up with a convincing little replica.

*—Joe Morgan*

## MMiR RECCE

**Fine Mold's Type 95 Ha-Go.** Purchased from the Kit Bunker, 2905 Spring Park Rd., Jacksonville, FL 32207. Price was $130.00 plus local sales tax.

#### References


*Tanks and Other Armored Fighting Vehicles of WWII by B.T. White.* Blandford Press, London, 1972. A handy little volume, now (I believe) out of print; I picked mine up in a used book store for about ten bucks.

*World War II Tanks by Eric Grove*, Longmeadow Press, Stamford CT 1987. About a $25 book, still pretty common; has some nice color plates of a Ha-Go.

*Armour of the Pacific War by Steve Zaloga*. Osprey Vanguard, London 1983. About $15, available in many hobby shops and mail order businesses; I got mine from Battle Hobbies, PO Box 184, St. Paul Park MN 55071 for less than $10.

*Tank Magazine, Number 5, 1985.* This issue contains several photos of the Type 95 deployed in China. This back issue will probably be tough to find. Check out someone in your local club who collects TM. Writing directly to the publisher might be worth a try.

# Mini Men

## DML

**German 6th Army (Stalingrad 1942-43)**
**Kit Number 6017**

BILLED AS A PART OF ITS CONTINUING WWII SERIES, this DML set fills yet another niche in the figure market. It's tough to get used to seeing figures this good in plastic. One normally associates this level of quality with metal or resin.

As the name implies, the set specifically models German soldiers at the time of the final battles for the Russian city of Stalingrad. As most of you know, this was a time of great struggle and hardship as the Germans were just about to get their clocks cleaned after being contained in the city all winter. Many specialized types of clothing were quickly being issued at the time and these are rendering in this set.

The subjects are all wearing great coats. For the ultimate in realism, DML has molded the legs underneath the coats. Additionally, all the figures have gloved hands. This is a nice feature and might be useful to steal for use on other subjects. One figure wears a fur cap of the type just then issued and the remaining three wear the "toque" type head cover. The heavy, fur-lined russet colored boots are also worn by two of the figures.

Some the figures had the straps for their breadbags molded on, which is a new wrinkle. We also like the fact that the quality of these sets is consistent, if not improving. For instance, the equipment is steadily increasing in quality as is the types of weapons. An MG34 is included here, and it is beautifully rendered, even including its flip-up sight. A drum magazine is provided for the MG and it fits into the gun most realistically. Russian PPSH's are supplied for two of the figures.

Like previous sets, this one is meant to work as a group. All four figures would look great huddled up behind a Panzer III or IV.

Highly recommended, probably the best set yet. We suggest as references: Andrew Mollo's *The Armed Forces of World II* or *German Combat Uniforms of World War Two* (Vols. 1 & 2, Arms and Armor Press, Uniforms Illustrated Nos. 5 & 7).

**Green Berets**
**Kit Number 3309**

THIS BOX OF "SNAKE EATERS" CONTAINS the usual four figures, only these portray three American Special Forces A Team members and one Vietnamese CIDG "Striker." The aggressive poses and light equipment provided remind one of the defenders of Lang Vei or some other frontier outpost on Vietnam's border. Painting and assembly guides are on the outside of the box which is, of course, the normal DML pattern we have all become familiar with.

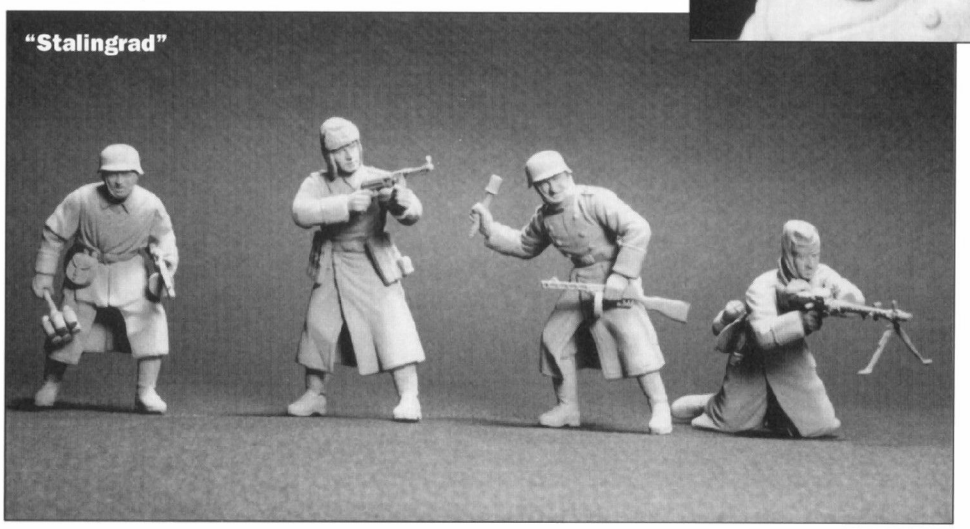
The weapon tree is the same given in several other 'Nam Series kits including the new LOH helicopter. It has two M-16A1s, one M-60 machine gun (not used), an M-79 grenade launcher, and two belts of M-60 ammo. These parts have some light flash to clean up and the usual mold seams around the perimeter. The weapons are competent moldings but do not offer any of the variety found in many Special Forces arms rooms.

The first figure of the four is a kneeling Vietnamese who has a "clicker" mine detonator molded in his right hand. A single Claymore mine is included in the kit to go with this guy. He carries the M-79 but his field gear does not include ammo stowage for more than a few grenades. His 6 BAR type ammo pouches are a nice touch, but a 40mm grenade bandolier would also have been nice. For some reason DML didn't give him a canteen since all three provided are to be used on the Americans. Anyway, he wears the Viet pattern tiger stripped uniform with exposed button pockets and with GI issue jungle boots.

A slight error, perhaps, is found with the figure's "boonie hat." The box artist (Volstad) correctly shows the Viet pattern hat, but the kit has U.S. issue boonie hats (2) which did not come in tiger stripes (ERDL camo pattern only—see *Shelby Staunton's Uniforms of the Vietnam War*). The way around this problem is to paint the hat green and forget the stripe job, or you could reshape it by rounding the crown slightly and removing the loop details from around the headband (repaint it—it's easier). The Striker scales out to about 5' 9" which is a bit tall, but not particularly noticeable in this type of pose and a few Viets were this tall anyway. The face looks properly oriental.

The second pose depicts a 5' 10" Green Beret sergeant in wide stance firing a .45 cal pistol at arms length. The uniform is the late ("third pattern") style rip stop nylon stuff with hidden buttons. Since this uniform was not issued until mid-1967 or thereabouts, it places the figure set in the later part of the war. This guy has jungle boots instead of the very common Corcoran jump boots, and his field gear are Army issue standard. Web gear, several ammo pouches, canteen, and med kit are carried.

The third figure is a buck sergeant (E-5) in late war jungle fatigues and beret, and is posed as if stuffing his M-16 butt into some one's face. This one has no stripes molded on the sleeves even though they show on the box art. The field

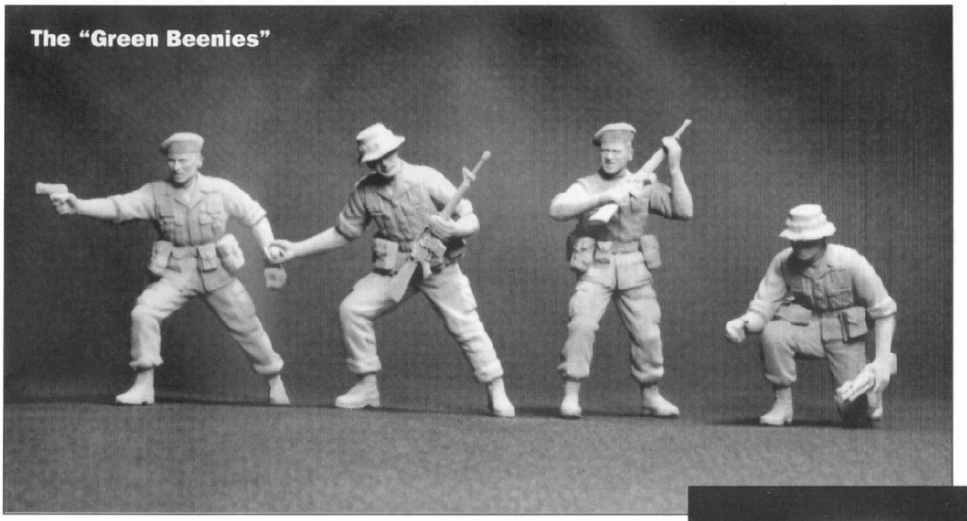


"Stalingrad"

gear rig is essentially the same as the last trooper, but a "SOG Bowie knife" is included for the web belt. He scales out to 5' 7" which makes him the "short round" of the group.

The last troop is another American but wearing the Viet pattern tiger stripped uniform with exposed button pockets. He is posed throwing a M26 frag grenade and wears a GI issue boonie hat. The same problem occurs with this hat, so see above. He carries an M-16A1 and his field gear comprises more BAR ammo pouches. A nice touch is rolled up pant legs, and this guy scales out to just about 6 feet tall.

This kit's poses are creative and can be used to make a number of conversions. For example, the two beret wearing figures can be changed into almost any late war GI simply by swaping the hat for a steel pot. So, even though you don't get John Wayne or "Mr. Sulu" in this box, DML's Green Beanies are a good buy and a welcome addition to their 'Nam series.


The "Green Beenies"

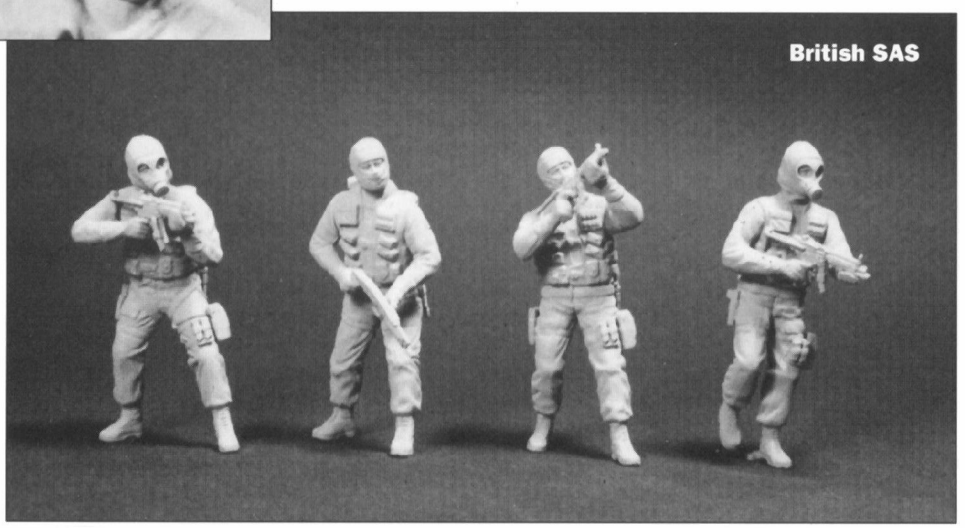
**British S.A.S.**
**Kit Number 6501**

THIS SET REPRESENTS THE FIRST IN SERIES OF SPECIAL reaction teams sets from DML. Others in the series will be: Hong Kong Police Special Duty Unit and the LAPD SWAT team set. We have seen the box art for the Hong Kong SDU and they are essentially the same set as our SAS friends here, with a few headgear and weapons changes. Regardless, these guys are really cool.

The SAS is the British Army's special reaction unit. These ultra bad dudes have been involved in many super secret ops around the world ever since WWII. Today they strike terror into the heart of many a terrorist. Some of their ops are so secret we never hear about them. You don't want to hear these guys knockin' at your door.

The set seems to represent a group that has just broken into a room and is ready to party, with weapons at the ready. Each figure is depicted with either a gas mask or an identity hood. Various equipment is provided as separate pieces, like flashlights, ammo pouches, knifes and side arms. It comes as no surprise that the detailing and sculpting throughout is top notch. What is a surprise is the subject. We're not quite sure what these guys would go with, the SAS doesn't use armor—except in their vests! (They do travel by helicopter, maybe 1/35th scale helicopter?) The interesting thing about the subject here is that it seems to demonstrate that DML is serious about bringing quality figures of all subjects to injection molding. And that can't be all bad, can it?

This set would be a nice little change of pace and might lend itself to a very interesting vignette.


British SAS

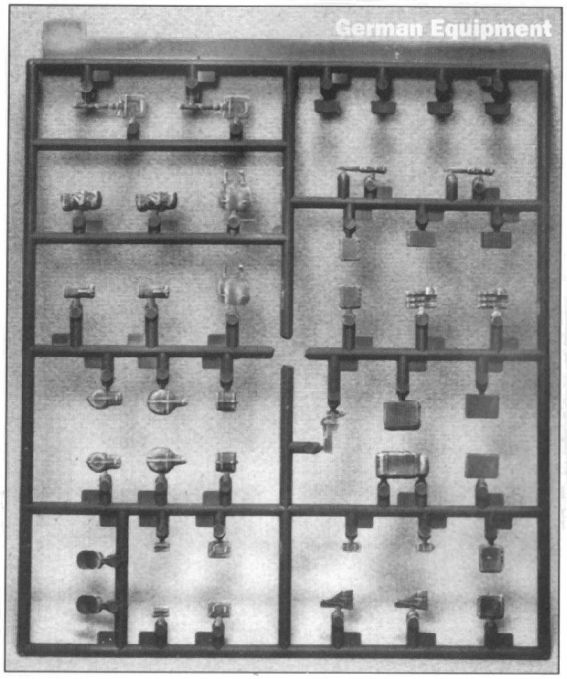
For reference, check out the Osprey Men-at-Arms title: *The Special Air Service* #116. This contains the full story of the SAS. Osprey number 157 also contains interesting information on modern body armor.

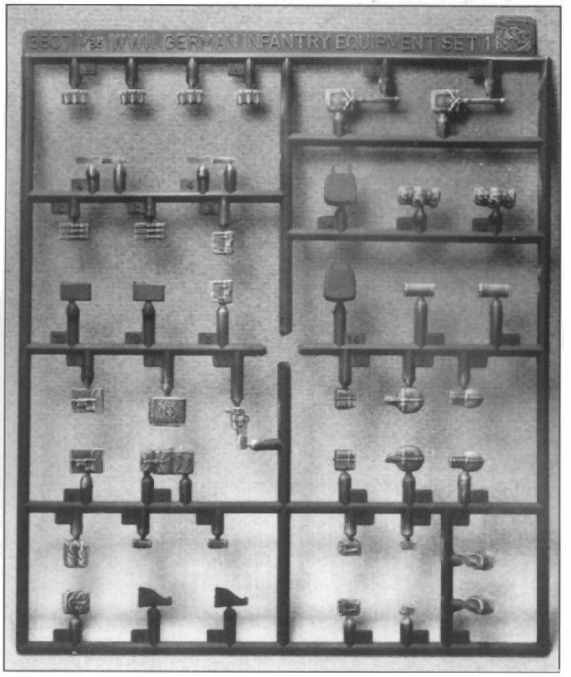
**WWII German Infantry Equipment, Set 1**
**Kit Number 3807**

THIS NEW SET IS PART OF DML'S 1:35 Quartermaster Series. This series of mostly weapons has been somewhat underexposed, we think. The previous sets have all been excellent and very useful. This set is no exception. It is composed of three identical sprues containing all manner of German equipment.

What you have here is all your basic infantry equipment, from the ubiquitous bread bag to the equally ubiquitous gas mask case. The full range of standard equipment is represented, so if you desired, you could outfit a figure with his complete kit. Even the gas sheet pouch is included. These were seen in the primarily in the early campaigns, where they were worn attached to the gas mask can straps. Two types of ammunition pouches are supplied; the MP 38/40 type and the 98K type. An especially nice touch is the inclusion of two M43 field caps on each sprue.

Several specialized pieces of equipment are also offered, such as a full set of assault engineer's packs; the large back pack and the two small side packs. A 2.7cm signal pistol in its holster and the pouch for its rounds is another unusual item. The most unique, we thought, was what was billed as a Mauser




holster/shoulder stock. This appears to actually be the entire weapon, albeit in its folded form. This piece is very delicately molded. This kind of tasty little detail is the type that would really spice up a figure.

The Wehrmacht standard M1934 backpack is also provided, although it's described as a medical pack and has the Red Cross brassard on its flap. This could be easily removed to show the pack as standard issue.

This set is a great deal (its costs the same as a DML figure set), and the fact that there's three sprues included enhances its value even more.

The box top is a terrific painting reference, but if a more complete description of all this equipment is desired, we highly recommend Osprey's *German Army Infantry Equipment of WWII* of the Men-at Arms series. It contains even more of that yummy Volstad artwork.

## Hornet

WE HAVE BEEN FORTUNATE TO HAVE REESTABLISHED contact with our old friend Mr. Roger Saunders. As most of you will recall, Mr. Saunders is the originator of the outstanding series of 1/35th scale figures; Hornet Miniatures.

As we reported in No. 1, Mr. Saunders is "soloing" with Hornet, being the sole operator of the line. We hope to bring our readers up to speed on all of Hornet's recent and future releases, but for now we have two new head sets.

For many modelers, Hornet is probably best known for its versatile range of replacement head sets. Available in a wide range of subjects, these little gems have transformed many a plastic monster. The master figure modeler, Bill Horan, also makes extensive use of these products in almost all of his work. The original set of Verlinden heads was also done by Mr. Saunders.

The first new set is a group of five heads wearing the US M1 helmet and cast in tan-colored resin. As in previous Hornet sets the sculpting and casting quality is absolutely superb. On one of the heads, the helmet is tilted in such a way as to reveal the gap between the steel portion and its liner! We could quite literally go on all day about the high quality of this work. We'll let the pictures speak for themselves.

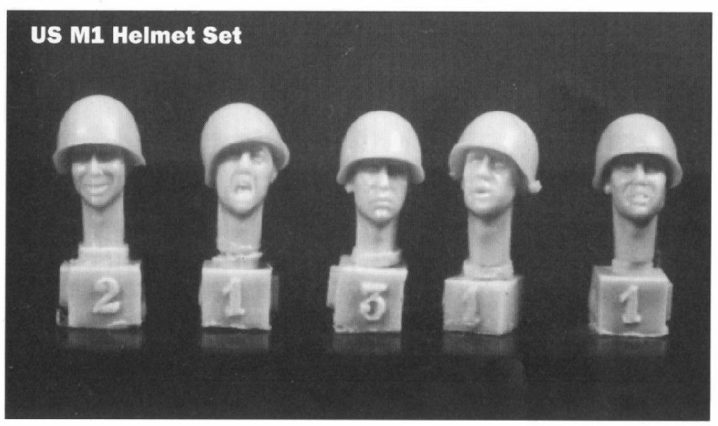
The second set is a five piece group of African heads cast in gray-colored resin. The five heads are sculpted in a variety of expressions. Perhaps only Mr. Saunders could have pulled these off with such finesse. Other manufacturers efforts in this area have all had a very comical feel to them. All five heads are sculpted bald, which generally increases their versatility.

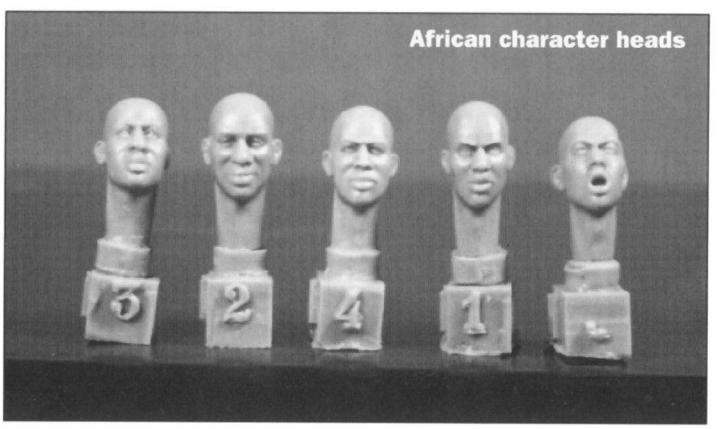
We might add that such a set is long overdue. Head sets depicting multi-ethnic types greatly enhances the range of choices for diorama and figure subjects. We have heard a set of Asian featured heads may also be in the works, and this would also be a most welcome addition.

Hornet products are a little hard to come by in certain places. Check with your local hobby shop first. If they don't stock them, they are available from several different wholesale distributors around the country, so they can be ordered through any hobby shop. If you're still not having any luck, one retail mail-order source we know of is: The Red Lancers, 342 Front Street, Milton, PA, (717) 742-3195.

The range is always available directly from Hornet. Inquiries should be directed to Roger Saunders & Associates, 290 Queens Road, London SE14 5JN England.

*—Complied by Ken Dugan and Pete Harlem*



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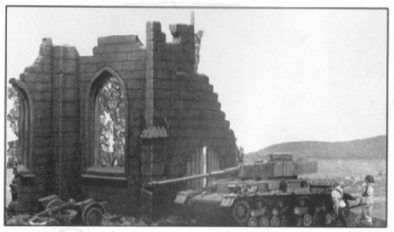

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FOR SALE - M-4 Sherman tanks in 1/35th scale. Currently have twenty plus BUILT models for sale. The models are of good quality with some exterior detailing. Bill Whitley, 311 Bundy Ave., Endicott, NY 13760.

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I am interested in Soviet military vehicles, especially ARV's and transport vehicles. Interested in exchanging all types of documents relating to subject. Please write. Murat Yilmazer P.K.: 366 Kizilay 06423 Ankara/Turkey.

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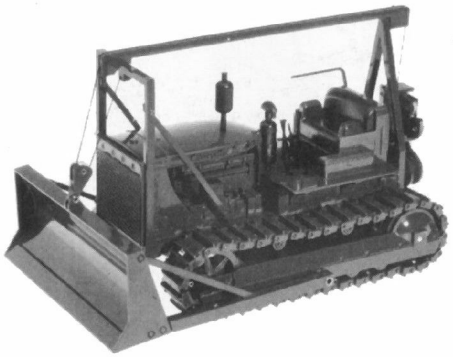

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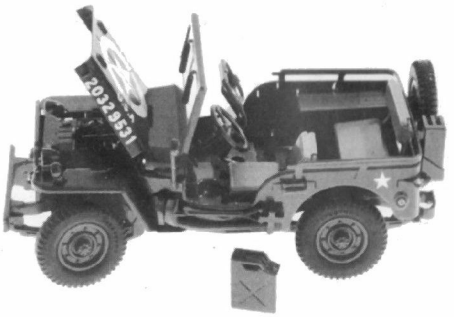
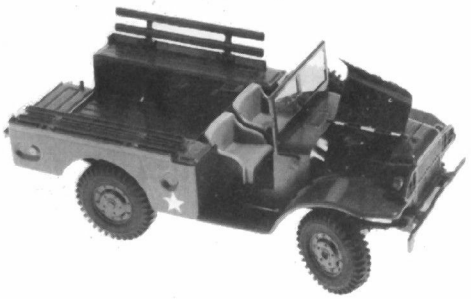


U.S. Army WC-51 "Beep" (1/24th metal)
@$119.95 + 7.50 S/H



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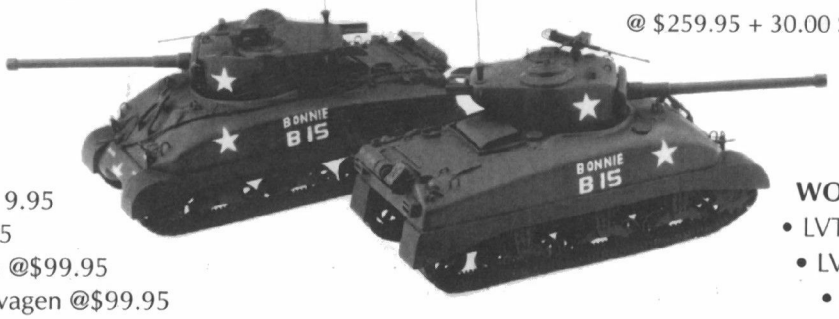


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